

Clinton sending Shalala to Lebanon

WASHINGTON (R) — Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala, the highest-ranking Arab-American ever to serve in a U.S. cabinet, will visit Lebanon in early December as President Bill Clinton's personal representative. The White House said on Wednesday that Shalala would be the first member of the Clinton administration to visit Lebanon after Tuesday's inauguration of newly elected Lebanese President Emile Lahoud. "The secretary's presence in Lebanon will underscore the importance the United States attaches to the U.S.-Lebanese partnership," a White House statement said. Shalala, whose grandparents emigrated from Lebanon, will meet Lahoud and other senior officials and visit health facilities. She will also address the students and faculty of the American University of Beirut. Lahoud took office as Lebanon's first new president elected since the end of its devastating civil war in 1990, pledging to make law enforcement his top priority.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
مؤسسة الصحافة الأردنية المستقلة

Kevorkian charged with 1st-degree murder

PONTIAC (R) — Michigan prosecutors on Wednesday charged assisted suicide advocate Dr. Jack Kevorkian with first-degree murder, criminal assistance for administering a lethal injection to a terminally ill man, Oakland County Prosecutor David Gorceyca told reporters he had not yet decided whether to seek the death penalty. Even if he does not, Kevorkian could still face life in prison without the possibility of parole. The criminal assistance charge carries a penalty of five years in prison and/or a \$10,000 fine, while the delivery charge carries a seven year prison term. Gorceyca said his office decided to press charges after viewing a videotape of the death of 52-year-old Thomas Youk, an edited version of which was shown on the CBS News television programme "60 Minutes" on Sunday.

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Arafat says Palestinian state to be created by May 4, 1999

PARIS (AFP) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat said here Wednesday he was determined to see the creation of a Palestinian state on May 4, 1999 and hit out at Israel's actions since the signing of the Wye River peace accord.

"I must say clearly that we will put everything in motion to create our Palestinian state on May 4, 1999, when the five-year transitional period comes to an end," Arafat said after lunch with French President Jacques Chirac at the Elysee Palace in Paris at the start of his two-day visit to France.

Chirac promised the Palestinians "as much help as possible" to finance "the devel-

opment of the indispensable Palestinian state."

Arafat said it was essential that last month's Wye River peace accord with Israel be implemented "carefully and rigorously."

But after a meeting on Wednesday evening with Egyptian Prime Minister Hosni Mubarak, who is in Paris for the 20th Franco-African summit starting on Thursday, Arafat said he was disappointed that Israel had only freed 100 political prisoners, one of the major parts of the accord.

The Palestinian leadership has been criticised by groups representing prisoners, which believe Arafat should have

secured guarantees on the 750 prisoner releases agreed in the Wye River talks.

The wording now allows Israel to interpret the accord to prevent the release of Palestinian political prisoners, the groups claim.

"The Israelis have freed 150 common criminals, which contravenes the accord," Arafat said.

He also criticised Israel for confiscating land in the territories, which was furthering its "colonisation" and for attempting to "Judaize Jerusalem."

Mubarak's political advisor Osama Al Baz said on Wednesday the United States, which brokered the

deal, had a large role to play in ensuring the Wye River accord was followed through.

"The Israelis say they want to apply the accord, but it is the Americans who are responsible for its strict application," he said.

In Chirac, Arafat has a supporter who has often called for the creation of a Palestinian state, while attempting not to offend Israel.

In the West Bank town of Ramallah in 1996 he called on Palestinians to build a state which respected democracy and respected Israel's "legitimate" wish for security.

Arafat flew to France on the first ever flight from the

newly inaugurated Gaza International Airport, which was authorised under the terms of the Wye River peace accord, although Israel retains control over the air-space and can close the facility at will.

An official ceremony marked Arafat's departure from the airport which Palestinians see as a symbol of their hoped-for sovereignty.

The visit is Arafat's first to France since January.

His agenda also includes talks with Prime Minister Lionel Jospin and National Assembly speaker Laurent Fabius.

Arafat leaves for The Hague on Thursday.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan on Wednesday meets with Zarqa deputies and senators in the presence of Cabinet members, the governor and other officials

Prince Hassan meets with Zarqa deputies, senators

ZARQA (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, met Wednesday with Zarqa deputies and senators as well as a number of Cabinet members, the governor and other officials.

During the meeting which included a lunch hosted by the Regent in honour of the senior officials at the army officers club, discussion covered a variety of topics related to the environment, public services and living conditions.

Also discussed were steps that could be taken to improve the living standards in the Zarqa Governorate and meet the local people's needs.

The Regent said in order to carry out this task ample and sound planning based on accurate information about the actual needs of the governorate are to be taken into consideration.

Stressing that lack of planning can never serve the purpose, the Regent said these needs can be met by activating

the role of the governorate's executive council.

The participants in the meeting discussed the prospect of benefiting from the experiments of the Greater Amman Municipality in conducting comprehensive planning.

Present at the meeting were the ministers of public works and housing, transport, interior and the minister of state for administrative affairs in addition to Amman Mayor Nidal Hadid.

Chile to fight British ruling denying Pinochet immunity

SANTIAGO (R) — Chile on Wednesday vowed to fight a British court ruling denying former dictator Augusto Pinochet immunity from prosecution on charges of torture and genocide.

The judgement by Britain's highest court, a panel of five Law Lords, means Pinochet must stay in Britain to face an extradition request by a Spanish judge unless Home Secretary Jack Straw decides to free him.

In Santiago, President Eduardo Frei said Chile would contest the ruling and reiterated Chile's claim that Pinochet, now a senator for life, enjoys diplomatic immunity. Frei said he would send a protest message to London on Thursday and ordered Foreign Minister Jose Miguel Insulza to fly to Europe to back up his government's stance.

"The ruling, which infringes on the principle of

immunity defended by Chile, will not make us change this government line," Frei said in an address to the nation. "This is not the end of the trial."

When the decision was announced, about 300 Pinochet activists in Santiago vented their ire on reporters, pushing, jeering and shouting insults at media covering reaction to the verdict. They were gathered at the Pinochet Foundation which grants military scholarships in Chile.

Pinochet's son, also named Augusto Pinochet, denounced the ruling, which came on his father's 83rd birthday, and said Pinochet was not defeated.

"My father has received a sadistic and cruel blow on his [83rd] birthday that goes beyond the rights of mankind," the son shouted to the unruly crowd at the foundation's offices as he visibly struggled to control his temper.

(Continued on page 12)

Turkish Prime Minister Yilmaz falls over graft accusations

ANKARA (R) — Conservative Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz's minority coalition collapsed in a censure vote over corruption allegations on Wednesday, pitching Turkey into economic and political uncertainty.

Speaker Hikmet Cetin, himself a possible candidate to head a transitional government in the run-up to a general election in April, said 314 deputies had backed a censure motion accusing Yilmaz of corrupt dealing in the sale of a state-owned bank.

Yilmaz's opponents needed 276 votes.

"The nation will soon make its own, real judgement on this government's service," Yilmaz said after the vote. The fall of the government was the first involving a censure vote. It was the fifth to collapse in three years and its demise will deal a blow to efforts to reduce annual inflation, now running at a rate of 62 per cent, and to cut a huge and costly domestic debt burden through international debt issues.

It could also further delay a key privatisation campaign.

Yilmaz, 51, formally submitted

his resignation hours later at President Suleyman Demirel's Cankaya palace.

With his Yilmaz's fall, considerable power passes to Demirel. Having served as premier himself seven times, Demirel, 74, has arguably the most refined sense for political power of any Turkish politicians.

"The country will not remain without a government," he said in the hours before the vote. "Everyone should know that."

(Continued on page 12)

Jordan against using its territory to 'topple any Arab regime'

By Tareq Ayyoub

AMMAN — Information Minister Nasser Judeh on Wednesday said that the Kingdom will not tolerate any activity in Jordanian territory aimed at toppling any Arab regimes.

Judeh, who was responding to a question on the government's stand on U.S. call to change the Iraqi regime, also urged Iraq to cooperate with the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM), in charge of dismantling Iraq's mass destruction weapons.

Earlier this month, U.S. President Bill Clinton said his country favours a new government in Iraq and would intensify efforts to have a democratic regime replacing President Saddam Hussein.

Clinton also said that his

administration will support any efforts by Iraqi opposition groups to topple the regime in Baghdad.

"We have nothing to do with this issue," Judeh told reporters during the weekly news briefing.

"Jordan is not a base for activities aiming at toppling the regime of any Arab or non-Arab country," Judeh said.

"Our stand is clear regarding the unity and sovereignty of Iraqi territories," he added.

"Our demand was clear that Iraq's inspectors should go back. Iraq's acceptance (to let them back) was a practical step that would prepare the ground for an overall review [of the sanctions] which would lead, God willing, to the (their) lifting," Judeh said.

Clinton's statement came

following a stand-off between the U.N. and Baghdad over the inspection activities in Iraq, where Washington was on the verge on launchings to air strikes against Iraq.

Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdul Meguid denounced Clinton's statement and said that U.S. has no right to change the regime in Iraq.

Jordan hosts an office of the Iraqi National Council, one of several Iraqi groups opposed to the regime in Baghdad.

British State Minister for Foreign Affairs Derrick Fatchett met this week with representatives of Iraqi opposition groups and discussed with them unifying their ranks to start their campaign to topple Saddam.

Netanyahu seeks broader political base

TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli leaders suddenly changed their foreign travel plans on Wednesday as they sought to strengthen a fragile right-wing government deeply divided over a peace deal ceding West Bank land to Palestinians.

While trying to woo former Foreign Minister David Levy back into the coalition, Netanyahu took Switzerland off his itinerary, flying instead to his second planned stop, Britain, to start a four-day trip that will also take him to Spain.

The Swiss government said it was sorry Netanyahu was not coming since it had planned to vent its anger over his endorsement of Israeli awards to four Americans who have harshly criticised Switzerland over Holocaust-era assets.

Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon said he put off a planned trip to the United States in order to try "to stabilise and broaden" the government. A statement said he would miss a Nov. 30 conference there to attract donations for Middle East peace.

The return of Levy, a white-haired champion of the

working class who quit in January, would strengthen Netanyahu at a time of political disarray.

Last week Netanyahu's own right-wing coalition denied him majority support in parliament for the land-for-security deal he signed with Palestinian President Yasser Arafat last month at the White House.

Israel carried out the first of three West Bank land handovers last Friday under the interim accord in which Palestinians agreed to security steps and various political moves.

Although the left-centre Labour opposition has promised to spread a "safety net" under Netanyahu's government in the 12-week period of Israeli redeployments, his coalition faces the prospect of falling later unless he widens support.

"I think it's important to secure as broad a base for the support for the peace process that we're negotiating, trying to achieve — security and peace for Israel," Netanyahu told reporters before leaving for London.

(Continued on page 12)

Iraq hails U.N. stand on documents, takes aim at Butler, oil-for-food

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraq took aim at both U.N. weapons chief Richard Butler and the "oil-for-food" deal Wednesday, while welcoming the Security Council's failure to take a tough stand in a row over arms documents.

A senior Iraqi diplomat hailed the Security Council's declaration as a victory for Baghdad and a snub for hard-liners Washington and London.

As tensions eased, U.N. arms experts started a second week of inspections since their return to Iraq. Ten jeeps left the Baghdad headquarters of the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) for disarming Iraq.

The arms experts were evacuated for a week earlier this month amid threats of U.S.-British air strikes on Iraq for its refusal to cooperate with

UNSCOM. But Iraq resumed cooperation Nov. 14.

Although Washington kept its forces on guard for the next time Iraq falls out of line, the Security Council on Tuesday failed to pass judgement on Iraq's reluctance to hand over more documents to UNSCOM.

"Council members expressed their continued full support for UNSCOM in fulfilment of its mandate," the panel's president, U.S. charge d'affaires Peter Burleigh, told reporters.

Despite nearly four hours of talks, no decision was made as to whether Iraq's refusal amounted to non-compliance.

"It was a snub for the United States and Britain, who were unable to convince the Security Council to adopt a hostile declaration which could lead to attacks," Salah Al Mokhar,

a newly appointed ambassador, told AFP.

UNSCOM's chairman, Butler, has issued a series of letters requesting documents containing specific data on Iraqi biological, chemical and ballistic disarmament files.

But Iraq is refusing to hand over new documents, saying that more than two million have been surrendered during the seven years that UNSCOM has been tracking down Iraqi weapons of mass destruction.

Butler, meanwhile, said he would be able to report on whether Iraq was in compliance in "two to three weeks." His report will determine whether a comprehensive review of sanctions goes ahead.

Under U.N. resolutions, an oil embargo in force since the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait

can only be lifted when the council is satisfied that all Iraqi weapons of mass destruction have been eliminated.

Despite the lack of consensus in the Security Council, the tone from the White House remained tough.

"If we believe that UNSCOM is not able to do the job effectively, if they're (the Iraqis) not cooperating and in compliance with U.N. Security Council resolutions, we will employ other options," the White House said.

But spokesman Joe Lockhart refused to say whether Iraq's refusal to provide more documents would provoke U.S. military action.

Under the U.N. oil-for-food accord, Iraq finally received the first shipment of spare parts for its battered oil industry, five months after such imports were authorised, a

U.N. spokesman announced Wednesday.

The ship loaded with demulsifier — for the treatment of crude oil — from the Netherlands reached the port of Umm Qasr in south Iraq, late Monday, George Somerville said.

The U.N. Sanctions Committee has so far approved contracts worth almost one third of the \$300 million allocated for such imports in June, amid Iraqi charges that Washington and London are delaying its contracts.

"Washington's hostility to the Iraqi people is highlighted by the decision of its representative on the Sanctions Committee to suspend until November 23 consideration of 105 contracts for spare parts," an Iraqi government spokesman told the official news agency INA.

Somerville said the United

Nations and Iraq were nonetheless set to hold talks in Baghdad on a new distribution plan for humanitarian supplies under the oil-for-food accord.

Despite criticism from Iraq, which wanted a two-month extension to make up for a \$1.6 billion shortfall in the fourth phase due to low oil prices, the humanitarian exemption to sanctions will go ahead, he said.

But the ruling Baath Party's newspaper, Al Thawra, branded the programme "obsolete" and no longer capable of meeting Iraq's needs, calling instead for the oil embargo to be lifted.

On Tuesday, the Security Council renewed the accord for a further six months at current levels, providing for Iraq to export up to \$5.2 billion worth of oil over a six-month period starting Thursday.

Over 7,000 candidates to compete in Syrian legislative elections

DAMASCUS (AFP) — Nearly 7,400 candidates will compete Monday for the 250 seats in Syria's parliament, the People's Assembly, in legislative elections expected to be dominated by the pro-government coalition.

Some 127 seats reserved for labourers and farmers will be fought by over 4,000 prospective lawmakers while the remaining candidates will contest 123 seats set aside for other sectors of the 15-million-strong population, Interior Minister Mohammad Harba said.

President Hafez Assad's National Progressive Front (NPF), which has won a majority of seats at the six legislative elections since Assad came to power 28 years ago, has "every chance of winning" for a seventh time, diplomats here say.

The NPF coalition of seven parties headed by the ruling Baath Arab Socialist Party will present 167 candidates.

At the last elections in August 1994, all 167 of the NPF's candidates were elected, the remaining 83 seats going to "independents."

A large number of wealthy businessmen and professionals with vague manifestos are running for the independent seats.

Some of the candidates, whose faces and names are pasted all over the capital, are spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on their campaigns, inviting voters to their homes for coffee and cakes.

At the home of a wealthy chocolate maker, Adnan Dakhalani, friends and supporters are treated to a full dinner.

One of few candidates with

a detailed list of electoral promises is 52-year-old businessman and current member of parliament Riad Seif, who is campaigning for "greater freedom of expression, lower unemployment and restructuring the economy."

Seif, who secured the largest number of votes for an independent candidate in the 1994 elections, told AFP he is optimistic that he can live up to his promises because he feels a "political will" among Syrian officials "to make the most of the country's human resources."

Another contestant, Aref Hanano, who has published his manifesto in three official Damascus daily newspapers wants to "improve wages, raise the standard of living, reduce taxes for the workers and put more weight on social issues."

But there are few candidates representing political parties outside the National Progressive Front coalition such as current member of parliament and doctor Basil Dahdoudh representing the secular, pan-Arab Syrian National Party.

Meanwhile, the official press is publishing more and more announcements of electoral meetings with NPF candidates in the run up to Saturday when electioneering closes.

Around 6.6 million voting card holders across the country's 15 governorates will each vote Monday from lists for a number of candidates in a one chance majority vote to elect deputies for parliament's next four year term.

Nearly 8,500 voting centres have been set up across the country in schools, factories and public buildings.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran considers Norway diplomacy request

TEHRAN (AP) — Iran said Saturday it is considering an official request from Norway to upgrade diplomatic ties strained three years ago over Tehran's death threat against author Salman Rushdie. Foreign Ministry spokesman, Hamid Reza Asefi, said Tehran detected "a transformation in the Norwegian outlook" on Iran, the official Islamic Republic News Agency reported. It quoted him as saying that Norway had submitted an official request to exchange ambassadors. Norway withdrew its ambassador to Iran in July 1995, leaving diplomatic representation at a lower level. Iran recalled its ambassador the previous year to protest what it called Oslo's hostile attitude. A statement from the foreign ministry in Oslo said Norway was ready to appoint a new ambassador to Tehran after Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi in September guaranteed that his government would not support any steps to carry out the death order against Rushdie.

'Iran takes action against sanctions-busters'

TEHRAN (AP) — The Iranian navy announced on Saturday that it had intercepted a number of boats in its territorial waters over recent days carrying cargo for Iraq in violation of U.N. sanctions. The navy impounded another vessel earlier this month, but a court order later forced it to release it, the official news agency IRNA said. Iran has angrily denied U.S. charges that it turns a blind eye to Iraq's efforts to get around the crippling U.N. embargo imposed following its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Bahrain says islands dispute with Qatar over

DUBAI (AP) — Qatar's claim to the disputed Hawar islands is without basis and the matter is effectively over now that the International Court of Justice (ICJ) is adjudicating the dispute, a Bahraini official said in an interview published Saturday. "There's no longer any basis [to Qatar's claim] concerning Bahrain's sovereignty over the Hawar islands," Bahraini Information Minister Mohammad Al Mutawa said in Saturday's edition of the Al Hayat newspaper. Qatari officials refused comment on Mutawa's statement, with one confirming only that the matter was under consideration by the ICJ in the Hague, the "competent body" to adjudicate the dispute.

PKK, Turkish agents battle in Cyberspace

ISTANBUL (AFP) — The publishers of an Internet website dedicated to lobbying for the release of Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan have complained of ham-handed interference attempts from the Turkish secret service MIT. In an e-mail distributed to its mailing list and received Saturday in Istanbul, the Centre for Kurdish Political Studies (CKPS) claimed MIT agents posing as technical staff from its Internet service provider had attempted to convince them to change their password, in order to tap into the site and change its content. "If I please change your password to PKK4321 for a security problem," the e-mail message from the "technical staff" read, according to CKPS. "The e-mail is easily traceable back to www.mit.gov.tr," the publishers said.

Iranian minister vows to track down killers of opposition leader

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iranian Interior Minister Abdul Vahed Musavi Lari vowed on Saturday to track down and arrest the killers of nationalist opposition leader Dariush Foruhar and his wife.

"This case will definitely be clarified. We will not hesitate for one moment. You will see that it will soon be discovered and the people will be informed," Musavi Lari told a press conference.

"The government is determined to get to the root of the matter and deal with the culprits whoever they may be or whatever their position," he said.

Foruhar, the leader of the Iranian Nation's Party, a movement banned but tolerated, and his wife, Parvaneh, were stabbed to death in their Tehran home over the weekend by intruders posing as guests.

Known for his strongly-held secular and nationalist views, Foruhar, a former labour minister, had been a strong critic of the Islamic regime.

Musavi Lari said he had been given instructions to "seriously pursue the case" by supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and President Mohammad Khatami.

"I assure you that the entire regime is behind the drive to solve the case with authority. They see the bitter incident as a move to fight the regime," he said.

"Some unclear, known or unknown hands are behind this attempt to destroy the new atmosphere of law and order which the government

advocates," the minister added.

He said a committee has been set up at the country's national security council to pursue the matter. The committee held a five-hour meeting on Friday and "some clues have been found," he said.

"Several people have been arrested and are being interrogated and some others are being sought. Their arrest may help us find the truth," Musavi Lari said.

But he said the authorities were still weighing various theories behind the murder case. "So far, we have no preference. I can't make a final judgement," the minister said.

Earlier a group of about 700 academics and liberal opposition sympathisers signed a joint letter denouncing the murder of Foruhar and his wife.

"Once again the criminal hands of the enemies of freedom have savagely killed a hero and his combatant wife," the 673 signatories said in their letter published in the moderate paper Eteelaat.

Signatories, who included former ministers and prominent professionals close to Iran's liberal opposition movement, announced they would gather on Monday in a central Tehran mosque close to the victims' home.

The murder has caused uproar in Iran, with Khatami denouncing it as a "repulsive crime" and ordering a special probe into the case, even though Foruhar was one of the Islamic regime's most outspoken domestic critics.



ANTI-OCALAN PROTEST IN BERLIN: Several thousand demonstrators waving Turkish flags and protest placards gather Saturday in downtown Berlin demanding the extradition of Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) leader Abdullah Ocalan to Turkey or to Germany. The placard reads "Murderer Ocalan must be brought to court." The detention of Ocalan in Italy and Germany's decision not to ask for his extradition has caused diplomatic tension between Rome, Bonn and Ankara over the last two weeks (AFP photo)

Cyprus insists on deploying Russian missiles on its soil

LARNACA (AP) — The S-300 anti-aircraft missiles that Cyprus has bought from Russia will be deployed in Cyprus as planned despite Turkish threats and Greek disapproval, the Cypriot foreign minister said Saturday.

The minister, Yiannakis Cassoulides, made the comments on his return from a Greek-Cyprus summit in Athens where the two countries failed to agree on the final destination of the missiles.

The Greek government is against the deployment of the missiles in Cyprus to avoid being dragged into hostilities with Turkey, which has threatened to use military force to prevent the deployment.

A Turkish action will automatically involve Greece under its joint defence pact with Cyprus. During the Athens summit Friday, Greek Premier Costas Karamanlis proposed setting up the missiles on the Greek island of Crete. But Cypriot President Glafcos Clerides refused to budge. The media in Greece and Cyprus described the talks as "stormy." Cassoulides said the matter will be discussed by the National Council, the Greek Cypriot policy-making body, which had initially decided last summer on basing the missiles in Cyprus.

Cassoulides said that decision "is still valid." Siminis, the Greek premier, also acknowledged that the final word rests with Cyprus. "In this case, and any other case, the Cyprus government will decide and there will be con-

sultations with Greece before hand."

Cyprus has been criticised by the United States and the European Union for its stand. The missiles are expected to be delivered in a month or two.

Cassoulides said Cyprus is ready to cooperate with the international community for the reduction of tensions on the island through its demilitarisation proposal, which is rejected by Turkey, and intensified efforts for the island's reunification.

Cyprus has been split into a Greek Cypriot controlled south and a Turkish-occupied north since Turkey invaded and occupied its northern third in 1974. A breakaway Turkish Cypriot state in the north is only recognised by Ankara which maintains 35,000 troops there.

Iraqi commandos crack down in Karbala after attack

BAGHDAD (AP) — President Saddam Hussein's eldest son, Uday, sent commandos to the southern city of Karbala during a crackdown following the assassination attempt on Saddam's deputy, Babel newspaper reported Saturday.

The newspaper, published by Uday, said 39 "saboteurs and agents" were arrested in the crackdown that took place 72 hours after the bid on Izzat Ibrahim's life on Monday.

It did not say how many of the tough and lightly armed commandos from Saddam's Fedayeen took part or how long the operation lasted.

Karbala is in the southern Shiite Muslim heartland, which has long been a source of opposition to Saddam.

Fedayeen is a paramilitary force of about 40,000 run by Uday.

To emphasise their ferocity, its commandos are often shown on television, butchering cats, dogs and wolves and then eating their raw meat.

They wear black masks on duty and their rough training is geared towards defending the country in a crisis.

Ibrahim escaped without injuries when an unidentified assailant hurled two grenades while he was attending a religious ceremony in Karbala, a Shiite holy city 110 kilometres south of Baghdad.

Several of Ibrahim's bodyguards and bystanders were wounded.

Witnesses said the lone attacker was killed by Ibrahim's bodyguards on the spot.

"Babel has learned that heroes from Saddam's Fedayeen, stormed hideouts of saboteurs and agents 72 hours after the vicious aggression on Mr. Izzat Ibrahim," the report in Babel said.

It said the decision to send the commandos was taken by Uday.

Babel did not say whether the 39 arrested people were involved in the assassination attempt but described them as those "who had sold themselves to the enemy." Ibrahim is Saddam's deputy on the powerful Revolutionary Command Council. He also serves as a deputy commander of the Iraqi armed forces.

No one has so far claimed responsibility for the attack on Ibrahim but Babel's report hinted that foreign agents were behind it — a reference to Iran.

Iraqi dissidents abroad claim Baghdad falsified the news about the assassination attempt to increase its repression of Shiite Muslims in southern Iraq.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 4773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

14:50Football Match
16:35Vid Kids
17:10 The American Chart Show
18:00 French Programme — "Le Grand Secret"
19:00Le Journal
19:15French Programme
19:30News Headlines
19:33The Brits Empire
20:00French programme — A Frique
20:30Drama — Walker, Texas Ranger
21:15 Doc. — Farming and Ecology
21:30Behind the Scenes
22:00News in English
22:30 Mini-series — Nothing lasts for ever
23:10Drama — Doogie Houser
23:59End of T.X.

PRAYER TIMES

04:50Fajr
06:11(Sunrise) Dhuha
11:24Dhuhr
14:13Asr
16:36Maghreb
17:58Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweidieh, Tel. 5920740
Assemblies of God Church Tel. 4632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 4624590
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 4622366
Anglican Church Tel. 4624853/4624811
St. Afrem Syrian Orthodox

Church Tel. 4771751.

Arman International Church Tel. 5865897

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 5688404

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 5811295

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Tel. 4654932

St. John the Baptist at De la Salle College Tel. 5661757

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 4637440

Greek Orthodox Church Tel. 4646138

Church of Presentation, Sweidieh Tel. 5920146

The United Catholic Church Tel. 4624757

The English-Language Catholic Parish Tel. 4614190

Evangelical Free Church Tel. 4892679

The Baptist Church Tel. 4628052

The Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 4771331

The Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 4775261

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

Temperatures will drop slightly, with skies partly cloudy. Light showers are expected over mountainous areas, and winds southerly to westerly light to moderate. In Aqaba, it will be occa-

sionally dusty, cloudy, winds northerly moderate to active, and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.

Amman14/22

Aqaba17/26

Deserts12/23

Jordan Valley19/24

Yesterday's high temperatures:

Amman 23, Aqaba 29 Humidity readings: Amman 33 per cent, Aqaba 43 per cent.

Following are the temperatures expected today in the following areas:

Ajloun09/15

Jerash11/22

Um Qays10/17

Madaba10/20

Petra09/20

Dead Sea14/23

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Khalil Ramadan5358723

Dr. Nidal Dahleh5827195

Dr. Osama Hussein5347289

Dr. Sa'ad Tawfik4788285

AMMAN:

Firas Pharmacy5661912

Al Salam Pharmacy4636730

Mayadah Pharmacy5337004

Roka Al Dawa Pharmacy5536169

IRBID:

Dr. Lutfi Shalabi(02)241798

Fou'ad Pharmacy(02)275360

ZARQA:

Dr. Ra'ed Attallah(09)994424

Palestine Pharmacy(09)983562

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre4637111

Civil Defence Department5661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue4630341

Civil Defence Emergency199

Fire Police 192, 4621111, 4637777

Fire Brigade4617101

Blood Bank4775121

Highway Police5343402

Traffic Police4896390

Public Security Dept.4630321

Price Complaints5661176

Water & Sewerage Complaints489467

Amman Municipality Complaints4787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance)121

Overseas Calls0132

Central Amman Telephone Repairs4623101

Abdali Tel. Repairs5661101

Jordan Television4773111

Radio Jordan4774111

Water Authority5680100

J. Electricity Authority5815615

Electric Power Co.4636381

RJ Flight Information44-53200

Queen Alia Int. Airport44-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery5921199

The Islamic, Abdul5661317

Hussein Medical Centre5856856

Luzmila4630195

Khalidi Maternity4644284/2

Akileh Maternity4642441/2

Jabal Amman Maternity4642362

Malhas, J. Amman4636140

Palestine, Shmeisani5607071

Shmeisani Hospital5607431

Jordan Hospital5607550

University Hospital5353444

Al-Muasher Hospital5667227/9

Al-Ahli, Abdali5664164/6

Italian, Al-Muhajreen4777101/3

Al-Bashir4775111/26

Army, Marka4891611/5

Queen Alia Hospital5157100

Arnal Hospital5607155

Al Arnal Cancer Centre5353000

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital(09)983323

Zarqa National Hospital(09)900560

Ibn Al Nafes Hospital(02)7101372, (02)7103101

Rosary Sisters Hospital(02)7102831, (02)7102011

Speciality Hospital(02)7103100

AQABA:

Princess Haya Hospital

(03)2014111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (44) 53200-5, where it should always be verified. Information on Royal Wings flights can be supplied on phone 4875201-5

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

07:10Bangkok, Sharjah (RJ)

08:25Bombay (RJ)

08:35Jeddah (RJ)

08:50Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)

09:00Beirut (RJ)

09:50Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)

17:45London (RJ)

18:05Paris (RJ)

18:05Athens (RJ)

18:25Madrid, Geneva (RJ)

19:40Frankfurt (RJ)



PHILOSOPHY CONFERENCE OPENS: University of Jordan President Walid Ma'ani on Wednesday speaks at the opening of the Fifth Arab Conference on Philosophy, which was organised by the Arab Philosophy Society in cooperation with the university's philosophy department. Taking part in the three-day conference are 20 researchers and intellectuals from Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Morocco, Yemen and Jordan (Photo courtesy of the University of Jordan)

Amnesty report on alleged rights violations 'inaccurate' — minister Union official sacked for attacking report

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Criticised by officials and backed by some civil society institutions, the latest Amnesty International report on Jordan did not leave anyone indifferent. The government on Wednesday described the report, which claims human rights violations have continued in the Kingdom despite the launch of the liberalisation process in 1989, as "inaccurate". "We are studying the report and we will respond when the study is concluded," Information Minister Nasser Judeh told a regular press briefing. In reply to a question, Judeh said the report seemed to be based on individual sources. As an example of the "inaccuracies" in the yearly AI document, which was released on Nov.

18, he mentioned a case, described by the international human rights group as "arbitrary detention," in which "fans of heavy metal music [were] accused of being 'satanists'."

The minister said the youths were arrested with legitimate reasons, specifically because they had been accused of desecrating churches and other offences.

The report, based on a memorandum sent to the government in June 1998, focuses on three main areas: the use of prolonged incommunicado detention against political suspects; restrictions on freedom of expression sometimes leading to the detention of suspected political opponents for non-violent activities; and reports of torture and ill-treatment of political and common law suspects.

In a statement carried yesterday by Al Dustour Arabic

daily, Minister of Administrative Development Basam Emoush also denied Amnesty's allegations about cases of arbitrary arrest and torture.

"There is nothing at all in Jordanian law that permits the beating or torture of detainees in any way. No one could be arrested in Jordan for his political ideas," Emoush reportedly said.

He was quoted as asking how opposition members could be arrested while there are 13 opposition parties in Jordan which he said express their opinions freely.

But the controversial report also broke ranks within the professional associations, considered the backbone of the opposition.

The chairperson of the freedom committee of the union of the 13 syndicates, Ishaq Khairi, was dismissed from his post earlier this week after he attacked the

Amnesty report as unfair and defended Jordan's human rights record in a TV talkshow last week.

Interviewed jointly with Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs Samih Bino during last week's edition of "Frankly, from Amman," Khairi stressed the country's achievements in the field of human rights, especially compared to the situation in some neighbouring countries.

But Hassan Jaber, chairperson of the Council of Presidents of the 80,000-member Union of the Professional Associations, reacted swiftly.

He said the decision to dismiss Khairi was made because he had spoken on behalf of the associations while expressing his own views.

Jaber also rejected Khairi's own resignation, which was submitted one day after his dismissal.

Judeh calls on Syria to appoint envoy, maintain cooperation

By Tareq Ayyoub

AMMAN — Information Minister Nasser Judeh on Wednesday said Jordan would like to maintain normal relations with Syria and called on Damascus to name an envoy to fill the post of ambassador, which has been vacant since 1990.

The minister described a recent water agreement between Amman and Damascus as a "good step" towards enhancing cooperation between the two countries.

Referring to an accord to construct a multi-million dinar dam on the Yarmouk River, Judeh said: "We hope that we will continue cooperation... and hope that a Syrian ambassador will return to Amman."

"Differences should not harm the core of our relations. They also should not affect cooperation between the two states," he added.

Judeh's statement followed a Syrian decision to release a Jordanian national held in Damascus since June.

Musa Karasneh, an

employee at the Cities and Villages Development Bank, one of several hundred alleged Jordanian detainees in Syrian prisons, was freed by Syrian authorities earlier this week.

"This is a good step and proof that our stand was correct. Syria was holding a Jordanian government employee, contrary to what Syrian officials were saying," Judeh said.

Syria had denied that it was holding any Jordanian officials or political prisoners in Syrian jails.

"One case is over. We hope that [Syria] will reconsider its stand on the whole issue," Judeh said.

Judeh said the Kingdom will not accept the detention of Jordanians without reason and demands that detainees have fair trials.

The issue of Jordanian prisoners and detainees strained relations between the two countries.

The government estimates that at least 300 Jordanians are being held in Syria, while an independent committee put the figure at 700.

Austrian products showcased to help boost Jordanian-Austrian trade

By Dana Charkasi

AMMAN — Austria has given Jordanian businesspersons and hoteliers a taste of Austrian food and music as part of efforts to promote bilateral trade, which remains heavily in favour of Vienna.

The "Austrian Evening," hosted at a local hotel by the Austrian Economic Chamber in Amman, attracted over 200 guests who savoured samples of Austrian foodstuffs and beverages against the backdrop "Heurigenmusik" — traditional Viennese songs.

It was the chamber's second such event in over two years.

"Invitees included potential new customers and current ones," Kurt Altmann, commercial counsellor at the

Austrian embassy in Amman, told the Jordan Times.

"We wanted to introduce Austrian foodstuffs to importers, wholesale traders, agents and hoteliers," he added. "We are also concentrating on foodstuffs because through them, we can draw people's attention to other Austrian products."

Altmann said the 1996 festival turned out to be a great success.

"We were able to put Austrian cheeses, fruit juices, sweets, and various sandwich spreads on the Jordanian market," he explained.

He said the price of Austrian foodstuffs was relatively competitive — often cheaper than similar locally produced items. Most of them, with the exception of alcohol and pork products, was "halal

food," fit for consumption by Muslims.

Jordanian-Austrian trade remains heavily in favour of Austria. In the first seven months of this year, Austria's exports to Jordan reached 155 million Austrian shillings (\$13.7 million) — a 30 per cent increase from the same period last year.

Jordan's exports, mainly phosphates and potash, dropped sharply to 3.4 million Austrian shillings (\$300,884) during the same period from 18.8 million Austrian shillings (\$1.66 million) in 1997.

Altmann attributed the drop in phosphate sales to the fact that the product is a concentrated additive and can be used in many items, thus decreasing demand, as well as to a general European trend towards "greener

materials.

He added that businesspersons in general were unhappy about delays caused by local government red tape, especially when clearing imports.

He also cited strict Health Ministry regulations set for food imports as another factor that has helped slow trade.

"In several cases we had to send back whole shipments of food because there was a tiny mistake in the translation of food labels, but the re-shipments were even more complicated as they had to clear the customs of the European Union and not just Austria," Altmann said.

He also said "the difficult economic situation [in Jordan]" has forced several Austrian firms to postpone planned projects.



CIRCASSIAN SOCIETY MARKS KING'S BIRTHDAY: To celebrate His Majesty King Hussein's 63rd birthday, the Circassian Welfare Society and its branches in the Kingdom organised a public march last Friday. Minister of Social Development Mohammad Kheir Mamsar led the march, which started at the society's headquarters at the Seventh Circle and ended at its celebration grounds. A group of children wearing traditional Circassian costumes and carrying the King's pictures and Jordanian flags walked in the front, followed by young horse riders and a Circassian cart adorned with flowers (Photo courtesy of the Circassian Welfare Society)

Jordan begins 'pioneer' project to help mainstream gender issues

By Hind-Lara Mango

AMMAN — Jordan is implementing gender auditing as part of plans to mainstream gender issues in 20 sectors under the 1998-2002 socio-economic development plan, an official said Wednesday.

"For Jordan it is a pioneer project, though some in the region have embarked on gender auditing, which is very tough to tackle and to achieve," Amal Sabbagh, secretary general of the Jordan National Commission for Women (JNCW), told the Jordan Times.

Gender auditing helps ensure there is no discrimination between men and women when implementing legislation.

The JNCW, a national policy platform for women's issues, is working with the Ministry of Labour and the Civil Service Commission to implement gender auditing under a scheme launched in March.

In a conservative patriarchal society where most policies are drawn up and implemented by men, such a task may be

complicated. Gender impact assessment helps ensure that policies which are generally drawn up by males do not have a negative impact on any sector of society.

"We are working in a conservative society. Social attitudes are not very receptive to the idea of women's education or work," Sabbagh said.

Her Royal Highness Princess Basma, JNCW chairperson, formed a technical committee of commission members to look into means of how best to undertake gender mainstreaming — part of a national strategy for the advancement of women.

Specialists in gender issues recognise that mainstreaming equality of sexes in the public sector is especially important.

However, certain methodologies and approaches are needed if this policy is to be put into practice, including gender auditing and gender impact assessment.

The experience of foreign gender experts is also being taken into account in the commission's plans.

"Our European colleagues are very advanced in gender

mainstreaming. They are doing a very good job at gender impact assessment and gender auditing, both of which could be easily adapted in Jordan," she explained.

"This 'gender sensitisation' in Jordan is one way of mainstreaming gender issues in public life," Sabbagh said.

"We have started doing this with the Institute of Public Administration, particularly with those who are going to be promoted and to become policy makers," she said.

Sabbagh also said NGOs were helping "break down social resistance to women's participation in public life."

"Gender sensitisation involves social change which will take a long time. But as long as we are on the right track, it will happen."

The JNCW works to link government and civil society, and NGOs are members of the commission, which was set up in 1992.

The JNCW has studied amendments to existing legislation to help remove discriminatory laws impeding the advancement of women, including citizenship rights.

Agriculture Ministry launches programme to increase olive production

IRBID (Petra) — The Ministry of Agriculture is working to promote cultivation of olives due to their importance for the national economy, Minister of Agriculture Mijhem Khreisha said Wednesday.

Olive rank second to wheat in importance for the national economy, and the ministry has been encouraging farmers and landowners to grow olive trees, which are now estimated at seven million, Khreisha said in an address at a meeting in Irbid marking the launch of Jordan's strategy for improving the quality of olive production.

The area of land planted with olives in Jordan, he said, is estimated at 700,000 dunums, and the area planted with olive trees comprises nearly 76 per cent of the total area of land planted with fruit trees.

Noting that the olive strategy is being spearheaded by the Ministry of Agriculture in cooperation with the Rome-based U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation, the minister said Jordan is hoping to acquire expertise from the FAO to help local farmers boost production through the ministry's agricultural extension service units.

Large-scale olive tree planting over the past few years has been conducted in conjunction with the FAO under a programme that originally started in 1963, according to the minister.

The olive production project is being carried out in the highlands of the Amman, Balqa, Zarqa, Irbid and Jerash governorates, said Khreisha.

He said the current extension and guidance campaign is designed to provide better and more advanced guidelines to farmers.

what's going on

FILMS

- * Spanish film "Bohemios" at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman on Thursday at 5:00 p.m.
- * Meeting and dialogue with Berlin-based Syrian artist Marwan Kassab Bashi" at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh at 5:30 p.m.

ANNUAL CHARITY BAZAAR

- * Annual charity bazaar of the American Relief Society, Thursday and Friday Nov. 26-27, 11 a.m. — 8 p.m. at the society's headquarters in Ashrafieh. (Traditional Armenian lace, hand-made gifts, Christmas cards, foods, home-made sweets, games and raffle. Tel: 4775268, 4773548).

PLAY

- * "Kind Chemo" (in Arabic) at Hassan Ibn Talal Auditorium, University of Jordan at 7:00 p.m. (daily until Nov. 29).

DISCUSSION

- * A discussion group dealing with "Society as a Scapegoat" at Books@Café, Jabal Amman at 3:30 p.m. (Tel. 5661717).

TENNIS MATCH

- * Tennis match between the Jordanian national team and the Iraqi national team at the Jordan Tennis Federation playground, Al Hussein Sports City, gate 4 on Thursday at 2:30 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

- * The Tenth Anniversary Exhibition of Contemporary Arab Artists at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh (Tel. 4643251/2, until Jan. 28).
- * Paintings by Farouq Hassan at Orfali Art Gallery, Umm Uthaina (Tel. 5526932), until Nov. 29.
- * Photography exhibition entitled "Windows and Doors" by Hani Hourani at Baladna Art Gallery, Gardens Street (Tel. 5537598), until Dec. 18.
- * Display of Jordan River Foundation (JRF) 1998 autumn/winter collection entitled "Falling Leaves" at the JRF showroom, Jabal Amman (Tel. 4613081), until Nov. 30.
- * Crossroads of Civilisations: More Than 100 Years of German Archaeological Activities in Jordan" (sponsored by the German Protestant Institute in cooperation with Petra Stone Preservation) at the Royal Cultural Centre, until Nov. 28.
- * Paintings by Jordanian artist Mohammad Abu Aziz at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Amman, until Nov. 28.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Regent receives Austrian minister

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Wednesday received Austrian Federal Defence Minister Werner Fasslabend for talks on means of further developing bilateral cooperation. Discussion also covered regional and international issues of mutual concern. The audience was attended by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Field Marshal Abdul Hafez Mirai Al Kaabneh.

Prince Ghazi attends ceremony

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Ghazi, His Majesty King Hussein's advisor for tribal affairs and head of Balqa Applied University's board of trustees, Wednesday laid the cornerstone of a mineral engineering building at the university. Prince Ghazi, deputising for His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, was presented with a medal by university president, Khaled Touqan, in recognition of his efforts on behalf of the university.

Vaccine test results expected next week

AMMAN (J.T.) — The causes behind an outbreak of illness among hundreds of students following inoculations against diphtheria and tetanus in September could be clear early next week, officials said Wednesday. "We expect to receive the results of tests conducted in Switzerland on samples of the D&T vaccines in the next few days," said Sa'd Kharabsheh, director of the Jordan Vaccines Institute. Health Minister Na'el Ajlounti announced in early October that samples of the D&T vaccines had been sent to Switzerland for further tests, after experts here had been unable to detect the causes behind more than 500 cases of high fever, dizziness, nausea, and headache, mostly among tenth graders.

'No ministry referrals to cancer centre'

AMMAN (Petra) — The director of Al Amal Centre, Abdullah Khatib, Wednesday said the Health Ministry has not referred any cancer patients to the centre to date. Speaking at a press conference, Khatib voiced hope that the centre would reach an agreement with the Health Ministry to refer patients covered by the ministry's health plan for treatment. Khatib noted that many citizens, particularly children, have not been able to benefit from the centre's professional experience and advanced equipment. Khatib said the centre has received 849 persons, including 421 Jordanians, since the beginning of the year. He added that 263 persons have been hospitalised at the centre, which has performed 125 operations, including 38 major surgeries, in 1998.

Confusion around reported Congo ceasefire

PARIS (R) — French President Jacques Chirac said Saturday the warring parties had agreed to a ceasefire in the four-month-old war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), but some of the key players immediately denied it.

There was confusion as to whether a ceasefire was formally agreed, and when it would come into force, after talks between the parties in the conflict and United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

Chirac told a news conference at the end of a two-day Franco-African summit of 50 countries that Annan "achieved... an agreement on the implementation of a ceasefire".

"There is already a document. The final signing should be completed rapidly, before the Ouagadougou meeting of the Organisation of African Unity on Dec. 16-17," he said.

But DRC President Laurent Kabila told reporters: "What accord? I

have not signed any accord."

Asked about a signing in mid-December, he said: "It's possible, but we have to prepare an accord."

"We will find a solution, we will do everything possible... We want peace," he added.

An official source at the summit had said earlier the ceasefire would take effect immediately.

Rwandan President Pasteur Bizimungu, who backs rebels trying to overthrow Kabila, also denied a ceasefire had been agreed, telling reporters it would be discussed at the Ouagadougou meeting.

"I do not think we have advanced... it was not useless, it's better than a break-up," he said.

Chirac said Annan had also achieved "an agreement on a commitment to end this absurd and so painful war".

After frantic efforts to arrange peace talks, Annan Saturday morning gathered Kabila and his



French Prime Minister Lionel Jospin (right) welcomes United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan at the Hotel Matignon. Earlier, on the final day of the Franco-African Summit, Annan gathered the warring parties in the four-month-old war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo which later agreed to an immediate ceasefire (Reuters photo)

backer President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe with Bizimungu and Yoweri Museveni of Uganda who support the rebels trying to topple Kabila.

The DRC rebels have not been invited to the

summit, and Bizimungu said this was the sole remaining obstacle to an end to hostilities.

The rebellion against Kabila has sucked in more than half a dozen countries and caused concern that it could expand into a major

regional war.

Annan and Burkina Faso President Blaise Compaore, chairman of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), worked feverishly behind the scenes to arrange peace talks.

Annan had met Kabila, Museveni and Bizimungu separately Friday night to try to arrange joint talks.

Chirac, the summit host, was scheduled to meet Museveni, Kabila and Mugabe separately later in the day.

Bosnian Serbs find more bodies in Sarajevo graves

SARAJEVO (R) — Bosnian Serb experts Friday expanded work to unearth suspected mass graves in two Sarajevo cemeteries and said they had found more bodies believed to belong to Serbs who died during the 1992-1995 war.

But international officials monitoring the excavation work said it was too early to say who the victims were and whether any war crimes had been committed against them.

"Autopsies must first be carried out," said Agneta Johansson, an official of the international body overseeing the Bosnian peace process, the Office of the High Representative.

By midday Friday, experts from the Bosnian Serb Commission for Missing Persons said they had discovered the remains of around 18 bodies at one end of the Lion cemetery near a residential area, where digging started Thursday.

Karan Zeljko, a Bosnian Serb forensic pathologist, said he believed they were civilians, but it was not yet known how they had died.

Friday, the experts also opened one more alleged mass grave in another cemetery nearby, believed to hold 28 bodies.

During the 43-month siege of Sarajevo by ethnic Serbs rebelling against Bosnian independence from former Yugoslavia in which 10,000 of its mainly Muslim inhabitants died, several thousand Serbs continued to live in the capital, once renowned for its cosmopolitanism.

Allegations of any possible

atrocities committed against some of them remain a sensitive issue.

Jasmin Odobasic, an official of the Missing Persons Commission of Bosnia's Muslim-Croat federation, said figures from the International Committee of the Red Cross showed that some 243 Serbs went missing in Sarajevo during the war.

Under the Dayton peace accords which ended the Bosnian war in which a total of 300,000 people died, the Muslim, Serb and Croat Missing Persons Commissions are obliged to allow their counterparts to carry out exhumations in each other's territory.

A bulldozer was used to remove surface soil from the second site Friday and digging later revealed two or three skulls, some bones as well as blue cloth and a pair of what appeared to be army boots.

A middle-aged woman who had provided witness testimony to the commission told reporters she had reason to believe that her father and mother were in the grave.

She said they had been abducted in 1993 by men belonging to a unit led by renegade Bosnian Muslim warlord Musan Topalovic, also known as Caco.

Last year, the independent Dani magazine said Caco and his men abducted and murdered Serb civilians and dumped the bodies in a Sarajevo mountain crevice known as Kazani.

Caco was killed in 1993 in a shoot-out with Bosnian government troops and police.

Town in freezing Urals without oil, gas

MOSCOW (AFP) — The 55,000 inhabitants of the town of Alapayevsk in the Urals, 200 kilometres north of Yekaterinburg, are without heating in glacial temperatures of minus 40 degrees Celsius, the Russian media reported Saturday.

Cash-strapped local authorities have been unable to afford to get in the usual supplies of gas and heating oil.

At least one woman has died of hypothermia, RTR television reported.

In blocks of flats which normally have oil-fired heating, the temperature has dropped below zero for the past week and there is no hot water and no gas for cooking.

Some residents have bought themselves wood stoves and are stockpiling logs and fire-

wood, the daily Izvestia reported.

In some districts, television reported, inhabitants all plugged in their electrical equipment, which overloaded power supplies and caused outages.

Almost all schools and nurseries are closed. It is even cold on maternity wards.

People fortunate enough to have cars have been driving around to keep their children in the warm.

In one hospital, RTR showed that the temperature was only four degrees Celsius in an operating theatre. Nurses managed to raise it to 10 degrees with auxiliary heating.

Authorities in Yekaterinburg have sent eight tanker trucks of fuel to help the town.

Chilean, British ministers meet as court extends Pinochet deadline

LONDON (AP) — After gaining an extra week to decide whether to allow the extradition of Gen. Augusto Pinochet on charges including genocide, Britain's government faced continuing pressure from Chile Saturday to let the former dictator come home.

"The Chilean people have to be allowed to judge and decide how they are going to deal with their past," Chilean Foreign Minister Jose Miguel Insulza said in a British Broadcasting Corp. radio interview.

Fourteen trials were already pending and Pinochet had no immunity from prosecution, said Insulza, who was himself an exile during Pinochet's rule in Chile. "These processes are going on and I fully expect they will result in justice," he said.

Friday, a magistrate granted a one-week extension — until Dec. 11 — for Home Secretary Jack Straw to decide whether to permit extradition proceedings to begin.

Pinochet, 83, who is sought by Spanish authorities on charges of genocide, torture and terrorism committed during his 17-year rule, remains under police guard at a London hospital, where he is recovering from back surgery. He was arrested by British police on Oct. 16.

There was fresh evidence of strains in Chile's relations with Britain. The Ministry of Defence said it has cancelled plans for the frigate HMS Sutherland to appear at a naval fair in the Chilean port of Valparaiso, and the Foreign Office said it was temporarily closing its consular office in the city. Four other British consulates and the embassy in Santiago remain open.

Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Stipendiary Magistrate Graham Parkinson ordered Pinochet to appear in court on Dec. 11 to hear Straw's decision, "subject to any medical reports." "There must be time given for proper consideration," Parkinson told attorneys representing

Britain, Spain and Pinochet Friday.

"It is in some respects quite a historic decision to make," Britain's highest court of appeal ruled Wednesday that Pinochet could not claim immunity as a former head of state.

Foreign Secretary Robin Cook, who met Insulza Friday, said he assured the Chilean that Pinochet's arrest and subsequent actions by the British government were not politically motivated, but were a matter of law.

"We both expressed our shared commitment to maintaining good relations between our two countries," Cook said.

Prime Minister Tony Blair's office said Straw would make the decision independently.

"He will not be seeking the views of cabinet colleagues," said a spokesman for Blair, speaking on condition of anonymity.

"The prime minister does not expect to be consulted on this at all."

Pinochet is receiving psy-

chiatric care for stress-related disorders, which his lawyers might cite in a bid to have him found mentally unfit to stand trial. The Times reported Friday, citing unidentified sources.

Straw, whose department is responsible for justice issues, has wide discretion to decide whether to send the Spanish extradition request through the courts — or to allow Pinochet to go free.

Pinochet's supporters, including former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, are pressing Straw to allow the general to return home on "compassionate grounds" because of his frail health and age.

Human rights activists are urging the government to let the case make its way through the British courts. A Chilean government report says 3,197 people were murdered or disappeared at the hands of the secret police during Pinochet's dictatorship, which began in 1973 when he overthrew President Salvador Allende. Allende died in the coup.

Swiss prosecutors move against Russian mafia

GENEVA (AP) — For decades Switzerland has been a residence of choice for the world's richest people, offering privacy, a bit of skiing and not too much of a tax burden on the good old numbered bank account.

The trial of Russian businessman Sergei Mikhailov, starting Monday, is the first major Swiss attempt to draw the line against Russians who obtained their wealth through organised crime.

Russians who made their money in the heady post-Communist years have flocked to buy villas on the so-called Swiss Riviera of Lake Geneva around Montreux and to secure their fortunes in Swiss banks.

Swiss officials say they don't have a breakdown of the Russians who have come to Switzerland since the fall of Communism, but that they issued residence permits to 5,695 former Soviets by the end of 1996, more than double the figure for 1991, when the Soviet Union collapsed.

Among the new residents, according to Jean Ziegler, an outspoken critic of the Swiss establishment, are top figures in the increasingly powerful Russian mafia.

"There are three stages of

Russian mafia penetration," Ziegler, a university professor and member of parliament, told The Associated Press.

"When the Soviet Union broke up, Switzerland was the laundering place for immense fortunes. Then mafia leaders started sending their families to Switzerland, putting their children in expensive private schools."

"Now we are in the third stage where some of the mafia dons are transferring their operational headquarters to Switzerland — and that is deadly dangerous," Ziegler says.

Geneva prosecutors say Mikhailov is head of the Moscow-based Sointsevskaya crime organisation, linked to the worldwide network of the mafia godfather Vyacheslav Ivankov — known as Yaponchik — who was sentenced to nearly 10 years in prison in New York last year.

Geneva prosecutors arrested Mikhailov more than two years ago on charges of money laundering and membership in a criminal organisation, as well as violations of the strict Swiss property laws.

The money-laundering

charges, however, have been dropped because of the difficulty of obtaining evidence from Russia, Geneva officials said. Mikhailov maintains that he is an ordinary businessman, though he admits to being "very, very, very rich."

Mikhailov faces a maximum of seven-and-a-half years in prison. While the 40-year-old has been held since his arrest in the prison of Champ-Dollon in Geneva, Swiss officials say that has done little to curb his activities. In March his Swiss lawyer was arrested after he was caught leaving the prison with letters from Mikhailov which had not passed through the censor.

Although ostensibly letters to Mikhailov's mistress, they are, Geneva authorities claim, just one of the many ways in which Mikhailov has continued to run his organisation from his prison cell.

The prosecution's main witness is former Moscow police officer Nikolai Oporov. He resigned from his job and received political exile in Switzerland following threats to his life and is now under heavy guard pending the trial.

Another probable prosecution witness, Vadim

Rozenbaum, who was due to be interviewed by the investigating judge, will not be giving evidence — he was assassinated in the Netherlands in July 1997. No one has ever been charged in the case.

Rozenbaum headed a Soviet cooperative in the late 1980s, and Mikhailov spent 19 months in detention at the time on charges of extorting money from him, but the charges were dropped for lack of evidence.

While Oporov is the only Russian enlisted for the prosecution, lawyers for Mikhailov are expected to call up to 25 Russians.

A total of 90 witnesses have been called, so the trial is expected to last two weeks, longer than the usual three or four days typical in Switzerland.

Ziegler says whatever the outcome of the Mikhailov trial, the only way to make a dent in the Russian mafia is to make sweeping changes to the banking system.

"Switzerland shouldn't allow the opening of Russian banks here, as more than 70 per cent are in the hands of the mafia, and we should be much more careful with residence permits," Ziegler said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Appeals court orders new trial in one of Craxi corruption convictions

ROME (AP) — An Italian appeals court overturned one of the corruption convictions against former Premier Bettino Craxi and ordered a new trial, news reports said Saturday. Craxi was one of several people convicted of taking kickbacks linked to the merger and quick breakup of Montedison, a privately owned chemical giant, and the state-owned ENI chemical group. The short-lived new enterprise was called Enimont. Many political and business leaders profited from the deal. Prosecutors alleged that the deal produced \$92 million in kickbacks that was divided among Italian political parties. Craxi, head of the Socialists, was convicted in 1997 and sentenced to four years in prison. Craxi, who is living in self-imposed exile in Tunisia, was convicted in several other corruption cases. Declared a fugitive from justice by Italian courts, he has repeatedly proclaimed his innocence and said he is the victim of a political vendetta.

Afghan opposition fires several rockets on Kabul, four wounded

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — Eight rockets pounded the beleaguered Afghan capital Saturday wounding at least four people, witnesses said. The rockets, apparently fired by the northern-based anti-Taliban alliance, hit the combined military and civilian airport as well as nearby civilian neighbourhoods. The airport was sealed off shortly after the assault, making it impossible to know the damage. The injuries occurred in a nearby neighbourhood. One man said he was on his way to the hospital to donate blood for his wife, who was to have surgery, when the rocket landed and he was wounded. "My wife has to undergo a major operation today... and I had to arrange blood (donation) for her, but I got wounded myself," said Abdullah, who like most Afghans uses only one name. There was no immediate comment from Taliban officials or from the opposition who are hunkered down in positions barely 20 kilometres north of the capital of Kabul. The rockets apparently were intended to stop Taliban jet fighters from taking off from the airport. In recent days dozens of jet fighters have taken off from Kabul heading north toward the front line in Kunduz and Baghlan provinces. The Taliban Islamic militia, which rules almost 90 per cent of Afghanistan, are Sunni Muslims and are mostly Pashtun — the majority ethnic group of Afghanistan. The opposition, which comprise mainly religious and ethnic minorities including Shiites, Tajiks, Uzbeks and Hazaras, controls the remaining 10 per cent of the country.

Poland seeks extradition of prosecutor from Britain

LONDON (AFP) — A 79-year-old British woman sought by Poland to stand trial over the alleged persecution of Communist opponents during the Stalin era Saturday dismissed charges against her as absurd. Polish-born Helena Wolinska, now a British national and married to an Oxford University professor, was Poland's chief military prosecutor during the hardline, post-war Communist regime. A Polish prosecutor is seeking her extradition on charges relating to the arrest and execution of a World War II Polish resistance fighter. Wolinska told the Guardian newspaper: "I will welcome any attempt to seek extradition. I am sure an examination in Britain, in front of an unbiased arbitrator, will reveal the absolute absurdity of the charges against me." The Warsaw prosecutor wants Wolinska extradited to face charges over her role in the arrest of General August Fieldorf, who commanded the Polish resistance. After the war, Fieldorf was arrested by Poland's pro-Soviet regime on charges of killing Soviet soldiers. He was sentenced to death in April 1952 after a one-day trial and hanged in 1953. Wolinska is accused of abusing her position to bring prosecution on false charges and of holding Fieldorf without charge for more than six months. If convicted by a Polish court, she could face up to 10 years in jail. The British Home Office said Saturday it had not yet received any request for Wolinska's extradition.

Television documentary makers trapped in frozen north

MOSCOW (AFP) — Four journalists making a documentary for Japanese television on polar bears and seals on the island of Wrangelya in the frozen far north of Russia have been trapped since mid-October with the early onset of winter, the daily Segodnia reported Saturday. The four journalists, a Japanese working for the NHK network, a Russian, a New Zealander and an Australian, have sent a desperate SOS message by e-mail: "Save us, whatever it costs. There has got to be a way out!" Their food supplies are running out, with only enough left for three days, and without cartridges, they cannot hope to kill any wild animals to eat, the paper said. Their camp is 120 kilometres from the nearest human habitation. A helicopter had been due to lift them off on Oct. 15 but has been grounded by snowstorms and violent winds in the port of Mys Shmidta. Weather forecasters Saturday predicted a violent cyclone over the region. The ministry for emergency situations said the helicopter was ready to take off with rescuers and doctors on board as soon as the weather permitted.

Canaleto painting stolen from noble Venetian family is recovered

VENICE, Italy (AP) — Police have recovered a painting by Canaleto valued at \$2.5 million that was stolen last month from the palace of one of Venice's oldest noble families, Italian media reported Saturday. Venetian police said they tracked down the thieves by monitoring their cellular telephone. They did not identify the suspects by name but said they were veteran thieves. The painting, a scene of a grain warehouse on the edge of one of Venice's famed canals, was the jewel of the Giustiniani family collection. It was taken the night of Oct. 21, along with several lesser works. Canaleto (Giovanni Antonio Canal) was the most famous painter of Venetian scenes of the 18th century and his works hang in many of the world's major museums. The stolen painting was signed by the artist and is one of Canaleto's well-known works.

Love Boat kept at port in drug probe

PIRAEUS, Greece (AP) — The cruise ship made famous by the long-running television show "The Love Boat" was stranded in port Saturday after two crew members were accused of carrying 25 kilograms of heroin. The two Filipino cabin attendants have been charged in the case and two other unidentified men were detained for questioning, police said. The Pacific Princess was used as the setting for the popular 1977-86 American show "The Love Boat" — where lonely passengers found romance. The drugs were discovered Thursday after the cruise ship Pacific Princess arrived at this port near Athens from Istanbul, Turkey, as part of a two-week cruise in the Mediterranean. Carrying some 600 passengers, mostly Americans, the ship had been due to sail on to the Greek island of Rhodes. It was awaiting permission to leave Piraeus from a public prosecutor handling the case. Gwyn Hughes, spokesman for the London-based P&O Cruises, which owns the Pacific Princess, said a few passengers had returned home on their own. But most were "enjoying their stay in Athens," he said.

دردی ۱۱۳۰



Sonia Gandhi (right), president of India's main opposition party, Congress, smiles as she leaves a polling booth after casting her ballot for Delhi state assembly elections in New Delhi. Also seen in the picture is party's candidate Shriela Dixit. The elections have been billed as the Bharatiya Janata Party-led ruling coalition's first test of popularity since it took power in mid-March (Reuters photo)

Millions vote in key Indian polls, PM says government stable

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Tens of millions of Indians voted Wednesday in key state elections that analysts warned could spell the beginning of the end for the country's Hindu nationalist coalition government.

The polls in New Delhi city and three states were widely seen as a referendum on the performance of the eight-month old federal coalition, led by Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party).

An expected swing away from the BJP to the main opposition Congress party could prompt Congress leader Sonia Gandhi to form an alternative coalition to challenge the Vajpayee government.

However, Vajpayee insisted Wednesday his fragile multi-party coalition would complete its five-year term irrespective of the election outcome.

"In spite of some difficulties, the government is performing well on all fronts," the United News of India quoted him as telling a public meeting in the

northern city of Lucknow. The prime minister stressed his coalition still enjoyed a majority in India's hung parliament.

Vajpayee's comments came as about half of the 83 million eligible voters in the capital and the states of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Mizoram cast ballots in the government's first test of popularity since taking office in March.

News agencies reported scattered violence, mainly in Madhya Pradesh, India's largest state.

Hundreds of thousands of police and paramilitary were deployed at 100,000 polling stations, with voters choosing between 5,000 candidates for 630 local government seats.

Public anger at recent sharp rises in prices of staple vegetables is widely expected to help the Congress, India's oldest party, wrest control of New Delhi and Rajasthan from the BJP.

The Congress is also hoping to overcome an anti-incumbency feeling in Madhya Pradesh and

Christian-majority Mizoram and hold on to both states for a whitewash.

A major Congress victory would increase the opposition pressure on Italian-born Sonia Gandhi — widow of assassinated premier Rajiv Gandhi — to try and oust the federal government.

"Congress upbeat, BJP tense," The Times of India newspaper said, warning that "the possibility of the (poll) outcome triggering a process of political realignment cannot be ruled out."

The Hindu newspaper said the odds were stacked against the BJP-led coalition.

But a political analyst argued the Vajpayee government would not collapse overnight, even if it suffered major reverses.

"In the event of an electoral disaster for the BJP, I do not think the government can be toppled in the next few days," G.V.L.N. Rao told AFP.

"It will take quite some time. Until an alternative coalition looks feasible, all possible partners of Congress will keep their

options open. They may not dump Vajpayee so quickly."

Indian Defence Minister George Fernandes echoed the view, saying that Wednesday's elections could not be seen as a referendum on Vajpayee.

"That is stretching political imagination far too much," Fernandes said.

Despite the problems, the Hindu nationalists have plenty of supporters.

A.K. Jain, a 40-year-old businessman, said he was sticking by the BJP and blamed market forces and fairweather coalition partners for the inflation and political instability which have plagued the Vajpayee government.

"They can perform very well if their allies let them," Jain said after casting his vote in New Delhi.

But Muhammad Nafiz, a Muslim student, said most Indians had enough of the Hindu nationalists.

"Even the Hindus are tired of them," he said.

The vote count will begin Saturday and most results are expected to be known within 24 hours.

Britain and Germany battle for top NATO job

BRUSSELS (AFP) — A battle between Britain and Germany for the post of NATO's top commander in northern Europe has prevented the alliance finalising the allocation of jobs in a streamlined new command structure, diplomats said Wednesday.

Under reforms agreed last year, NATO's existing Northwest and Centre regions are to be brought under the authority of a single North Europe (AFNORTH) command, based at Brunssum in the Netherlands.

Brunssum is currently the headquarters of the Centre region, which has traditionally had a German commander. The northwest region, based at High

Wycombe, England, is commanded by a British general.

Germany, which sees itself as under-represented in the upper echelons of NATO's military structure, is determined to retain the top post at Brunssum.

But Britain has also demanded the new job, arguing that it should be compensated for giving up the right to have a NATO headquarters on its soil.

The battle has been particularly intense because the AFNORTH commander will be the most senior European officer in the revamped structure.

The posts of NATO's Supreme Commander in Europe and commander of AFSOUTH at Naples, Italy,

will continue to be occupied by American generals.

Officials on NATO's international staff, who have been attempting to broker a compromise between Bonn and London for over two months, failed again to break the deadlock during a meeting of military chiefs of staff from the 16 allies here Tuesday, diplomats said.

Germany rejected a compromise under which the post would be rotated between the two countries while Britain refused to accept a deal under which it would get a number of lower ranking posts in return for giving up its claim to Brunssum.

"The Germans are counting (generals') stars and

they are adamant that the British have already got more than enough," one source close to the discussions said.

The issue will now be referred to NATO defence ministers, who meet here in mid-December.

The outlines of the new NATO structure were approved last year. Designed to make the alliance more flexible now that the threat of invasion by the Soviet Union has disappeared, it involves a reduction in the number of headquarters from 65 to 20.

The new structure is due to be rubber-stamped at a summit of NATO leaders in Washington next year and implemented over the following three years.

Serbian president in Kosovo, Albanians reject talks

PRISTINA, Yugoslavia (AFP) — Serbian President Milan Milutinovic arrived in Pristina Wednesday for talks on the Kosovo crisis, which ethnic Albanians have refused to discuss with him directly.

Milutinovic met with representatives of other national minorities in Kosovo, including Turks, Muslims, gypsies and Egyptians.

Serbian authorities Saturday released an interim plan for Kosovo solution,

which strengthens ties between the rebellious province, whose ethnic Albanian majority seeks independence, and the Yugoslav Republic of Serbia.

Kosovo Albanian leadership rejected the plan and demanded that any talks with Milutinovic should be held only on the basis of the U.S. draft proposal on Kosovo, presented by U.S. envoy Christopher Hill.

The main difference between the Serbian plan

and a U.S. draft proposal is Belgrade's insistence on equal representation in all Kosovo institutions by all ethnic communities living in the province.

In Pristina, Milutinovic was accompanied by Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic's special envoy for Kosovo, Vladan Kutlesic, Yugoslav vice premier Nikola Sainovic and three Serbian vice premiers.

This is the 18th time

Kosovo Albanians failed to show for direct talks with the representatives of Belgrade. The two rival sides met only once, in May, and have been reportedly negotiating through Hill's mediation.

Kosovo Albanians, who make up 90 per cent of the province's population, are demanding independence or at least a referendum over Kosovo's future to be held after a transitional phase. Belgrade has rejected the call.

eye on British creation, innovation and communication arts

Who should attend

- Creative directors -
- Art directors -
- Graphic designers -
- Illustrators -
- Production managers -
- specialists
- corporate communication -
- prepress managers -

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It may be banal. It is definitely not a bigger threat to the world than the current financial crisis. But he admitted that it will hit him no idea how badly. Indeed, he is less cautious: after the war, the world is likely to be poorer.

The culprit is not devaluing currencies or ballooning trade imbalances or computer code bugs. His effect is simple: "I don't want to be able to judge the years 2000 and 2010 on bank dates as quite likely to be on the same machines, power supplies — all could stop working. The thing is: it could stop working. Everything else is guaranteed. Everything else is guaranteed. Hundreds of billions of dollars paid to computer experts. But no one knows what is affected, nor how much will be solved.

Does anyone know, in too much detail, how one crash could send shock waves through the world? No one knows for sure until it strikes.

Edward Yardini, chief economist at Bank of New York, reckons that a millennium recession is not the biggest. Bank HSBC says it will reduce economic growth by 2000 — but warns that a millennium bomb actuality will not escape the economy and the Bank of England turned their minds to the 1990s results. In effect, the economy will be as bad as we have no idea how badly the problem

Society on the move

Making friends with the Brits

DEPUTISING FOR THEIR ROYAL HIGHNESSES Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, and Princess Sarvath, Princess Sumaya Bint El Hassan attended the annual dinner of the Jordanian-British Friendship Society. The Princess noted that the event reminded her of the contributions made by the Anglo-Jordanian Society in the U.K., of which she is vice president. Like her parents, as well as her sisters, TRH Princess Rahma and Badiya, Princess Sumaya is a graduate of the U.K. The Anglo-Jordanian Society carries out similar activities to its sister society in Jordan: both seek to promote cooperation and understanding between the two nations. Society President Tareq Suheimat, former minister of post and communications in the May 1993 cabinet formed by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, welcomed Princess Sumaya and spoke of the society's activities saying that it would soon issue a quarterly bulletin to keep members informed of activities and achievements. Attending were Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Akel Bilalji and British Ambassador to Jordan, Christopher Battiscombe.

SLIGHTED? Official guests to Jordan were many last week, and by all accounts all but one went home smiling for the welcome they were accorded. Now we all know that Jordanian hospitality is a national asset that every visitor to the country takes particular note of. But according to Israel Television's Channel 2, as translated by the BBC, Israeli Foreign and Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon's one-day visit to Amman ended on a sour note. According to the TV reporter, the minister returned home disturbed by questions put to him by Jordanian journalists. The reason was that at a Monday press conference, one journalist asked Sharon about Israel's culpability in the 1982 Sabra and Shatila massacre in Lebanon. It appears the Israeli official thought there would be no questions at this press conference, or at least, comfortable ones.

ACCIDENTS DO HAPPEN: Moving on to a sideline report of the euphoric opening on Tuesday of the Gaza International Airport, we have learned that the VIP lounge at the airport suffered a bit of damage — inadvertently of course. As Palestinian President Yasser Arafat proudly welcomed HRH Prince Faisal and the 54-member Jordanian delegation into the lounge it became evident that the area was crowding up rather swiftly. Experienced at these sorts of events, but probably as excited by the occasion as everyone else, one Jordanian cameraman diligently went about his work unperturbed by the commotion — but he failed to notice a particular ornament jutting out from the centre of the room. Moving to shoot a different angle, the cameraman landed in a fountain pool. Film still rolling, he got himself up to resume shooting and save himself further embarrassment, as until then, few had noticed the incident. He could not possibly have seen that the camera cord became entangled in the fountain, and thus as he moved away, a loud crash was heard. All heads turned to see what had caused such a disturbance. There in the middle of the room lay one downed fountain.

PRIMING A PRESIDENT? A small note on the U.S. Senator from Kansas who visited Amman last week. Senator Sam Brownback, who met with Prime Minister Faysal Tarawneh, is said to have been groomed by Republican leader Robert Dole to replace him when he retired in 1996 to run for president. It must be said that Dole had no fear of a young whippersnapper filling his shoes. Brownback is only 32 years old. The minimum age requirement to run for the U.S. Senate is 30, and for president, 35.

SUDS TO STRATEGY: Austrian Federal

Minister of Defence Dr. Werner Fasslabend, who was visiting Jordan with his wife Martina, has had an interesting career. With a doctorate in law obtained from the University of Vienna, Fasslabend had a career with the large detergent manufacturer, Henkel-Persil, rising to head of sales of the corporation, which continues to do a hefty business right here in Jordan. In 1987 he was elected as a member of Parliament. Fasslabend is a member of the Austrian People's Party, a minority partner of Austria's coalition government led by the Social Democratic Party.

ADD IT UP: University of Jordan Professor Mohammad Raqab was Wednesday awarded \$2000 at the Royal Scientific Society by the Third World Academy for Science for his advanced research on applied mathematics. The annual prize was the fifth given to a Jordanian by the academy in the fields of physics, mathematics, chemistry and biology. The academy, established in 1983, aims at encouraging and supporting scientific research in developing countries.

A FAVOURITE: HRH Princess Taghreed Mohammad will open The Armenian Relief Society's annual bazaar today (Thursday), which is being held on the occasion of His Majesty King Hussein's birthday and to mark the anniversary of the society's establishment in Jordan. The bazaar, which runs from 11:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m., will continue on Friday. Traditional Armenian lace, hand-made gifts, Christmas cards, pottery as well as savouries and sweets, plus games and a raffle are in store at the society's headquarters in Ashrafieh. For directions call 477-5268 and 477-3548. The society was the third charitable society to be established in the capital. In the early years they offered relief services to Palestinian refugees from both the 1948 and 1967 wars. Later, as part of the General Union



Soprano Kathryn Magestro and pianist John Ferguson, who will perform famous works by American composer George Gershwin on Monday, Nov. 30, at the Al Waha Ballroom of the Marriott Hotel. The programme is hosted by the American Centre and sponsored by the Marriott, Fastlink and AMOCO

of Voluntary Societies, the Armenian Relief Society provided assistance to Sudan during the mid-80s famine. The society is a major contributor to the Amal Centre, which last night held a large fund raising event in London. The society's major efforts today include providing tuition assistance to school children and helping underprivileged families, as well as university scholarships for excellent students.

SOMETHING SPECIAL: The Noor Al Hussein Foundation and the National Music Conservatory (NMC) will present

a concert of "musical relics" in a classical programme of a variety of chamber music and famous opera arias on Wednesday Dec. 2 at 8:00 p.m. at the Radisson SAS Hotel. The performers have been selected from the faculty and students of the NMC for this special benefit event. All proceeds will go to the fund established in memory of Dina Habash at Al Marath Foundation for Humanistic Care. Dina fought a brave battle for several years against cancer. She was 32 when she died last April. Her parents, André and Nelly, established the fund to provide hospice care to terminally ill cancer patients in Jordan.

COLORATURA: The Instituto Cervantes in Amman will present an opera concert on Tuesday, Dec. 1. Arriving from Spain for this one-night only performance will be mezzo-soprano coloratura Pilar Jurado. Ms. Jurado will be accompanied on flute by Manuel Rodriguez and on piano by Julio Muñoz. The programme includes several songs from Spanish composers such as Jesús Guridi, Joaquín Nin and Federico García Lorca, as well as Mozart, Donizetti, Puccini and Rossini. The concert will be held at the Terra Sancta Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

— Jennifer Hamarnach



Bug puts the bite on world recovery

By Anthony Browne

IT MAY be banal. It is definitely nerdy. But it could be a bigger threat to the global economy than the current financial crisis. The Treasury has admitted that it will hit the economy, but has no idea how badly. Independent economists are less cautious; after the millennium, they warn, the world is likely to find itself in severe recession.

The culprit is not devaluing currencies, debt overhangs or ballooning trade deficits. It is errant pieces of computer code: the millennium bug. Its effect is simple: the computers affected won't be able to judge the difference between the years 2000 and 1900. Any that rely on dates are quite likely to crash: systems from banking to lifts, air traffic control to life support machines, power stations to fax machines — all could stop working.

One thing is certain: the date the bug will strike. Everything else is guesswork. Across the world, hundreds of billions of pounds — some estimate it at as much as £400 billion — is being paid to computer experts to solve the problem. But no one knows how much of industry is affected, nor how much of the problem will be solved.

Nor does anyone know, in today's interconnected economy, how one crashing computer could send shockwaves throughout industry. No one will know for sure until the millennium hour strikes.

Edward Yardini, chief economist of Dresdner Bank in New York, reckons that the chance of a millennium recession is now 70 per cent. Britain's biggest Bank, HSBC, predicts that the bug will reduce economic output by just 0.5 per cent in 2000 — but warns: "Whether or not the millennium bomb actually goes off, the U.K. economy will not escape unscathed."

After a whirlwind of speculation in the City, Treasury and the Bank of England officials have now turned their minds to the problem — with disturbing results. In effect, they admit that the economy will be adversely affected, but have no idea how badly — so they're ignoring the problem.

The Chancellor of England, Gordon Brown, accepted in his Pre-Budget Report that the "millennium bug problem poses a significant global economic and government challenge," and noted that "some loss of output immediately following the date change seems likely." But "because of the wide margins of error, Year 2000 effects are excluded from the Report."

The Bank, in its Quarterly Inflation Report this month, came to an identical conclusion. It noted a risk that the bug would hit output "boost inflation", but said: Given the significant uncertainties involved, the monetary policy committee has decided not to incorporate "Millennium Bug" effects in its central projection.

But not all government bodies are ignoring it. Action 2000, the agency responsible for making sure companies become "millennium compliant", has warned that up to 3 million jobs could be lost because of the bug. Its managing director, Gwyneth Flower, warned: "Two-thirds of small and medium sized companies aren't doing enough. If they don't take adequate action, we estimate 25 per cent of them could go to the wall. Up to 200,000 companies could find themselves out of business."

The millennium will affect the economy in different ways, all of which may be relatively minor, but all of which will act in concert to boost growth in 1999 and depress it in 2000. The combined effect of the many small influences is likely to be a sharp slowdown in 2000, irrespective of how hard the bug bites.

The huge sums of money being spent on solving the problem will reach a peak in 1999, but largely unwind throughout 2000: the computer software industry, having grown so spectacularly, is sure to suffer a massive collapse. Economist Leo Doyle at Dresdner Kleinworth Benson estimates that even if all bugs in all companies are eradicated, the bursting of the computer bubble will mean growth [in Britain] will be 0.5 per cent less in 2000 than in 1999.

It is also clear that not all the bugs will be easily beaten. Doyle predicts that even if only 15 per cent of U.K. plant and machinery is vul-

nerable, and 80 per cent of those problems are solved, output will still be reduced by two per cent — easily enough to trigger a recession.

But the question is not just how widely the bug will strike, but where. A power station that is brought down could put wide swathes of industry out of action. But even smaller companies being put out of action could have big consequences.

"Earlier in the year, Ford U.K. lost three days' production of the Fiesta, costing it £18 million, just because a door-lock manufacturer in Germany went bust," said Flower. "The ripple effect along the supply chain could be the most severe way industry is affected." With so many companies dependent on just-in-time deliveries, any supply disruption could have wide-spread consequences.

Even if U.K. companies solve all their own bugs, they will still be vulnerable to how other countries cope. Alison Cottrell, chief international economist at stockbroker Paine Webber, warned: "Many developing countries, where much of the software is pirated and where they can't afford to solve the bugs, are vulnerable — and they are now the West's just-in-time suppliers."

Flower, herself a director of a company that does business with the Far East, said: "Any company that sources supplies from mainland China needs to look at alternatives."

To protect themselves, many firms are likely to start stockpiling supplies towards the end of 1999. But this in itself could make a recession more likely: it will boost growth next year and make the slowdown in 2000 more pronounced as companies use up stocks rather than placing more orders.

Cottrell said: "It's this stockpiling which is usually responsible for sending economies into recession."

The bug's effect abroad could hit Britain in more straightforward ways. Many of this country's trading partners, such as Japan and Germany, are far less advanced in solving the problem. In Japan, the financial system is near collapse anyway, and preparations are way behind. Wide-spread computer disruption

could bring economic disaster.

The bug comes just as the global economy is struggling back on to its feet. "You could have a double whammy," said Flower. "A soft landing could turn into a hard landing if the bug does its worst."

The antidote to all this gloom could be something far simpler: good old human inventiveness. Earlier predictions of catastrophe — from Malthus's 1798 warning about famine to the Seventies fear of energy shortages — have so far been confounded by improved agricultural productivity, better oil-extraction technology and improved energy efficiency. If their computers go, small companies in particular will be able to go back to pen and paper. If the lights go, you can take the stairs.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, said: "Past experience suggests that people are resilient and adapt well to serious disruptions in ways that minimise overall macro-economic effects."

Alan Wilson of consultancy Oxford Economic Forecasting has studied the impact of the bug, and predicts that it will depress economic growth by only 0.3 per cent. "We were reassured by looking at some of the other disruptions economies have faced," he said. "The three-day week in the Seventies had a remarkably small effect on GDP, and Canada quickly got back to normal after the ice storms earlier this year."

You could also drown your sorrows at millennium parties, but this could be another case of the cure killing the patient. The large-scale preparations, celebrations and millennium building projects will boost growth in 1999 — one estimate is that it will be by as much as one per cent. But again this will wind down in 2000, reinforcing the slowdown.

There is probably only one way to escape a millennium recession. Cottrell suggests: "Go to live and work in an economy that isn't based on the Christian calendar — you'll be laughing."

— The Observer

Absurd but simple cures

By Jean-Claude Elias

THREE ENGINEERS are riding in a car. An electrical engineer, a chemical engineer, and a Microsoft engineer. Suddenly the car stalls and stops by the side of the road. The three engineers look at each other with bewilderment, wondering what could be wrong.

The electrical engineer, not knowing much about mechanics, suggests, "Let's strip down the electronics of the car and try to trace where a fault might have occurred."

The chemical engineer, not knowing much about electronics, suggests, "Maybe the fuel has become emulsified and is causing a blockage somewhere in the system."

The Microsoft engineer suggests, "Why don't we close all the windows, get out, get back in, open the windows again, and maybe it will work." This joke with some serious connotation is currently circulating in the cyber world. A friend forwarded it to me this week on the Web. Those who didn't get it, please read the last paragraph again, capitalising the first letter of the word "windows" and everything will become crystal clear.

For the vast majority of us MS-Windows users who suffer from regular, frequent, rare, random or intermittent Windows crashes, the joke has a bittersweet taste. Closing Windows operating system, shutting off the computer and starting all over again is the solution to most cases where the machine freezes for no apparent reason. Technically speaking there is always a reason, of course. But providing an accurate diagnostic of the problem is either too complex — and not worth the trouble — or simply impossible sometimes.

chip talk



A typical Windows installation with all its parameters, its variables, the large number of application programmes that run with it, is an extremely complicated set-up. In addition, such an installation is never static. It is constantly modified when you access Internet, add or remove programmes, change any setting in your display, connect or disconnect a piece of hardware for instance. Analysing the reason why your computer suddenly goes on strike from time to time is just not feasible. That is why the most basic method is recommended: closing everything and starting over. It may sound unorthodox, unprofessional to tell users "I don't know why it stopped, just do it this way, it MAY work", but this is how it goes.

My own PC at home is finely tuned, built with the very best components, and has the safest, most updated anti-virus protection available. It is powered through a UPS (uninterruptible power supply unit) giving it a perfectly stable and clean power supply. I also avoid experimenting with unknown programmes or accessories. In spite of all these precautions it still has an average of one crash every two or three months, an acceptable rate by today's standards. Even as a computer professional, I don't waste my time working out why it did it — I just press the "reset" button and restart.

I guess life is full of examples where we hold the cure, the remedy to a given problem but cannot tell exactly what its cause may be. Such a cure may seem crazy, simplistic and naïve, but it works and that's what counts.

Whether this approach is acceptable or not in the very case of Windows is a matter of opinion. To express yours, contact directly Mr. Bill Gates (Microsoft Headquarters, Redmond WA, U.S.).

NB! (seriously...): if your Windows crashes more than say once every ten or fifteen days, this could mean that there is a problem that needs to be addressed and fixed. The primitive "reset and restart" method is definitely not an acceptable solution in such a case.

'Poverty continues to affect anything between a quarter to one half of the Egyptian population'

ILO puts unemployment rate in Egypt at 17%

CAIRO (AFP) — The International Labour Organisation (ILO) gave a harsh assessment Wednesday of the employment picture in Egypt, saying the jobless rate stood at 17 per cent instead of the official 10.8 per cent.

ILO experts said Egypt must sustain six per cent growth annually over the next five years to bring down unemployment to 6.4 per cent.

The assessment was issued at a press conference on the eve of a one-day meeting between representatives from the ILO and U.N. Development Programme, Egyptian cabinet ministers, employers, trade unionists and academics to seek solutions to unemployment and related poverty.

"We have very, very urgent problems which need to be addressed in Egypt concerning human resource development," said Samir Radwan, director of the development policies department at the Geneva-based ILO.

"Egypt's 65-million-strong population is growing at a rate of 2.2 per cent annually while the labour force is growing at a rate of 2.6 per cent," Radwan said, adding that the economy was growing at around five per cent. "This is above average for developing countries," Egypt's total labour force stands at 17.7 million people.

Officially there are two million long-term unemployed "and if we add to that the new graduates who enter the labour market and if we correct the figure for women's participation we reach 17 per cent," Radwan said.

"If you also add the under-employed we get 40 per cent," Radwan said, urging the government to heed these figures.

"One third of the labour force is employed by the government and the public sector while 38 per cent work for the private sector, including 4.5 million in agriculture and 3.7 million in informal jobs," Radwan indicated.

"Only a very thin minority is in the modern sector, such as industry, services and finance, which is really the engine of growth," he pointed out.

According to the ILO "poverty continues to affect anything between a quarter to one half of the Egyptian population," with the poor concentrated mostly in Upper Egypt.

ILO training expert Anthony Twigg said Thursday's meeting will focus on creating jobs and alleviating poverty through better training, linkage between education and training, upgrading productivity and quality and setting specific guidelines for skills.

"Lots of studies have been made but we feel that

the time has come where we have a definitive strategy for employment creation in Egypt," Radwan emphasised.

"Policymakers talk about investments and how they will create so many thousands of jobs. If you add all these jobs promised Egypt would have been a labour-short economy for 20 years now," Radwan said.

Radwan said employment should become a "direct policy objective" of the Egyptian government.

"The Egyptian economy has been witnessing a healthier situation at the macro-economic level since 1995 and this is reflected in the level of its gross domestic product (GDP) which has been growing at five per cent for the past couple of years," Radwan said.

"At the same time inflation is going down from 50 per cent at the end of the 1980s to 15 per cent in 1991 and now it is about 7.2 per cent while Egypt's reserves increased from \$6 billion in 1991 to about \$18.4 billion now," Radwan added.

"Despite this impressive performance, a major shift in policy is required if the government is to achieve its stated objectives of raising real GDP growth rates to an average of 6.8 per cent until the year 2002," the expert concluded.

IMF chief says worst of world crisis seems over

MADRID (R) — The head of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said Wednesday there were some reasons to be confident that the worst of the world's economic crisis was over, but he cautioned there were still obstacles ahead.

IMF Managing Director Michel Camdessus said Japan was one of the economies that was still shaky and said the IMF had forecast the Japanese economy would shrink by about three per cent this year and register no growth next year.

"The forecast agencies are very pessimistic (about Japan)," Camdessus said in a speech in Spanish in Madrid. "The IMF forecasts a decrease in the economy of about three per cent in 1998 and we hope in 1999 the figure will be just around zero."

He said that the Japanese economy should continue recovering by 2000 but "it was not sure."

The IMF managing director applauded the Japanese government's efforts to impose economic growth and revamp the banking sector, but said he did not know "whether they will be sufficient."

He repeated previous comments that if Japan's economy does not stabilise it could jeopardise the

recovery of other Asian economies.

Camdessus praised efforts by South Korea and Thailand to improve their economies and said recovery should begin in those nations by next year.

He said the overall picture looked better, but said it was not yet smooth sailing for the global economy.

"Is the crisis over? I wouldn't say that. We are listening now to some signs of relief...that the worst of the crisis is over," Camdessus said. "But we can't allow ourselves...a false sensation of security."

Commenting on European involvement in the crisis during the question period, Camdessus said an interest rate cut by the European Central Bank (ECB) would be welcomed due to the global economic crisis.

"A decrease in rates (by the ECB) would be useful for Europe and the rest of the world at this time," he said.

But he added that any cut should be tied to a commitment from the governments to respect the European Union's Stability and Growth Pact.

He was commenting after being asked what he thought of the current debate among the 11 euro-zone nations in Europe on whether to ease the tight

fiscal demands of the pact in order to increase public investment and job creation.

Earlier in the day, Camdessus told a local radio station that recent improvements in the economies of some countries, like South Korea, were a good sign for the global economy.

He also cited recent interest rate cuts in Brazil and the tendency for lower rates in Europe as signs of improvement.

He also said the \$41.5 billion international credit line from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for Brazil "has shown that there will not be a domino effect in Latin America."

But Camdessus said he did not expect to see great improvement in the Brazilian economy until next summer.

"Brazil will go through a period of zero growth...a little more than zero or a little less...during the next spring and summer,"

Camdessus said, adding that the economy would be helped by the IMF-sponsored credit line.

Camdessus also pointed to Russia as a possible trouble area, and urged the country to present a strong plan to stabilise its economy.

"The most urgent thing for them to do is adopt important measures of credibility in fiscal policy and tax gathering," he stressed.

Exchange Rates									
Wednesday, 25-11-98									
CURRENCY	JORDAN DINEAR	SAUDI RIAL	U.S. DOLLAR	EURO	YEN	PAKISTANI RUPEE	INDIAN RUPEE	THAI BATH	NEW ZEALAND DOLLAR
JORDAN DINEAR	1.0000	0.1887	0.1927	1.8779	1.8389	0.1944	2.3388	0.2077	0.7000
SAUDI RIAL	5.2884	1.0000	1.0213	9.9499	9.7434	1.0302	12.3805	1.1008	3.7510
U.S. DOLLAR	5.1981	0.9792	1.0000	9.7427	9.5405	1.0087	12.1228	1.0778	3.6725
EURO	0.5325	0.1005	0.1026	1.0000	0.9792	0.1035	1.2463	0.1035	0.3370
YEN	0.5438	0.1026	0.1048	1.0212	1.0000	0.1067	1.2707	0.1219	0.3493
PAKISTANI RUPEE	5.1434	0.9707	0.9914	9.6586	9.4582	1.0000	12.0182	1.0883	3.6000
INDIAN RUPEE	0.4280	0.0808	0.0825	0.9037	0.8750	0.0832	1.0000	0.0980	0.3000
THAI BATH	48.415	0.9087	0.9280	9.0312	8.8535	0.9361	11.2488	1.0000	3.0000
NEW ZEALAND DOLLAR	21.4631	4.0546	4.1408	40.3427	39.5055	4.1769	50.1980	4.4621	15.2700
U.S. DOLLAR	1.4124	0.2668	0.2722	2.6524	2.5973	0.2746	3.3003	0.2934	1.0000
EURO	0.8517	0.1608	0.1642	1.5995	1.5663	0.1686	1.9902	0.1788	0.6000
YEN	2.4066	0.4542	0.4638	4.5184	4.4256	0.4679	5.6234	0.4939	1.5000
PAKISTANI RUPEE	1.9873	0.3751	0.3830	3.7319	3.6545	0.3864	4.6436	0.4128	1.4000
INDIAN RUPEE	0.0692	0.0129	0.0133	0.1300	0.1273	0.0133	0.1600	0.0133	0.0400
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Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

NAF chief reveals problems of non-repayment and failures of small projects

**** NEARLY 35 per cent of the small projects backed by the National Aid Fund (NAF) have failed, said Khaled Ghneim, NAF acting director. He attributed the failure to fraudulent acts by the beneficiaries due to difficult economic conditions and lack of specialised cadres at the fund to follow up on the projects. Ghneim stressed that the responsibility for the failure of most of the projects falls completely on the beneficiaries who either sold the projects at half their cost or did not follow up correctly on the work for lack of experience. Ghneim said NAF has started to sort this problem gradually by implementing the regulations amended by the board of directors.**

He indicated that article 19 of the regulations stipulate that if a beneficiary is found to have given up the project without informing the NAF administration, the penalty would be to double the loan amount and repaying it over half the period agreed before in addition to referring the beneficiary to the NAF lawyer.

The acting director mentioned non-repayment of instalments as another problem for NAF but he attributed that to weak security in the past and the widespread favouritism. Ghneim indicated that non-repayment was on the decline as the rate of settling dues has risen to 45.7 per cent (Al Dustour).

Halaiahqah mentions trade exchange through Internet as new challenge for Jordan

**** JORDAN FACES many challenges now and in the near future but most importantly is trade exchange through the Internet, said Ministry of Industry and Trade Secretary General Mohammad Halaiahqah. He added that the volume of trade through the Internet amounts to \$2 billion and is expected to reach \$300 billion by the year 2005.**

Halaiahqah indicated that this matter requires many changes until finding a solution to problems related to a system of trade such as signing documents, taxes and customs. Speaking during a seminar, the secretary general called for benefiting from the experiences of other world countries in the area of "good manufacturing practice." He also called for formulating a new terminology that would go along

the coming era describing it as "good exports practice."

The secretary general said: "We suffer from a deficit in the trade balance as our imports are 2.5 times the value of our exports." He stressed that there is no way out from the international recession cycle without resorting to exports. He stressed exports for Jordan specifically because of the small size of the market.

Halaiahqah emphasised that the Jordanian economic policy focuses on two main elements: Attracting investment and consolidating national exports. He highlighted the importance of the two elements in keeping the flow of foreign currencies to the Kingdom and in easing the rate of unemployment (Al Dustour).

Central Bank reserves stood at JD2.4b at end of September

By Tareq Ayyoub

AMMAN — Gold and foreign currency reserves at the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) declined to JD2.4 billion in September compared to JD2.5 billion during the same period of 1997, the CBJ's monthly report showed Saturday.

The report, which was made available to the Jordan Times, indicated that the Kingdom's foreign reserves in September amounted to \$1.32 billion, which covers Jordan's imports for four months, compared to

JD1.59 billion in September 1997, or enough to cover Jordan's purchases for 4.8 months.

One reason for the decline in foreign reserves according to recent news reports was the sudden demand for the U.S. currency following the media reports of His Majesty King Hussein's health.

The King has been under treatment for non-Hodgkin Lymphoma in the United States since July.

The 100-page report also showed that assets in foreign currencies in commercial

banks amounted to JD2.45 billion in September compared to JD2.15 billion in the same period last year.

The assets in local currencies in these banks amounted to JD7.8 billion in September compared to JD7.52 billion during the same month in 1997.

While the commercial banks' deposits amounted to JD6.6 billion in September, up from JD6.4 billion in the same period of 1997, foreign currency reserves in these institutions amounted to JD2.5 billion compared to JD2.3 billion in September

of last year.

The credit facilities extended by the licensed banks to different economic activities and borrowers in September amounted to JD4.2 compared to JD4.03 billion in the same period of 1997, the report found.

Deposits in Jordanian dinars in the commercial banks' branches in the Palestinian self-rule areas amounted to JD1.69 billion compared to JD1.56 billion in September of 1997, the report found.

The CBJ statistics indicated bad cheques in September

amounted to JD38.4 million compared to JD41 million in August of the current year.

Total foreign grants and domestic revenues in the second quarter of this year amounted to JD364 million while the government's expenditure in the same period amounted to JD505.3 million, with a deficit of JD141.3 million, the report said.

Tax revenues in the second quarter of this year amounted to JD202 million compared to JD129.8 million in non-tax revenues, it added.

UAE warns foreign banks to hire more nationals

DUBAI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has threatened foreign banks with a freeze on new foreign recruitment unless they step up their efforts to hire nationals, newspapers said.

"It is possible that the government will stop new visas allowing banks to hire foreigners," the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, Matar Hamid Al Tayer, was quoted as saying by Al Bayan newspaper.

Banks were urged by the government last year to raise recruitment levels for locals by four per cent a year.

But Tayer said local recruitment by some of the country's 48 foreign banks stood only at about one per cent a year.

He said his ministry "could sanction these banks, if they do not conform to the decision of the authorities, and forbid them to hire foreigners."

Official estimates put the number of Emiratis in the banking and insurance sectors at about 12 per cent of the total workforce of 12,000.

In 1996, the UAE expelled 170,000 illegal foreign workers and has tightened its immigration laws.

Foreigners account for about 85 per cent of the country's population of 2.4 million.

Swiss insurance premiums rise in 1997 to \$32.2b

BERN (AFP) — Gross insurance premiums in Switzerland rose 8.5 per cent in 1997 to 44.2 billion Swiss francs (\$32.2 billion), largely due to growth in the life insurance sector, the Federal Office of Private Insurers (OFAP) has said.

Gross premiums in life insurance rose 13.7 per cent last year compared to 11.7 per cent in 1996.

However, those in the casualty and property division fell by 2.2 per cent, OFAP said.

An influx of new entrants into the Swiss market has more than compensated for the disappearance of some firms due to mergers.

OFAP counted 164 private insurers in Switzerland in 1997, or 11 more than existed two years previously.

Seven of the newcomers are foreign firms establishing branches in Switzerland, where there are a total of 32 such branches, most specialising in life insurance.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You're in the mood to travel, back to old, familiar stomping grounds. If you can gather up a bunch of your buddies to go with you, so much the better. Looks like all of you are in the mood to play — more for the fun of it than for the gold medal. Knowing you, however, you might win one anyway.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You could get a lucky break today, financially. You might find something on sale, or a pants pocket. How long has it been since you cleaned out the attic or basement? There might be a surprise just waiting to be discovered. It's a good idea to beaten down for the winter anyway. That can be your excuse to go treasure hunting.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) This is a fabulous day for sports. If you've been thinking about running the marathon, go for it. Your energy level will be high, and your friends will be a great support. It'll be even more fun if you're playing a game with teams. Softball may not be in season right now, but you can find something that is.

CANCER: (June 22 to July 22) You're busy again today, possibly at the insistence of an older person. You should be the one who decides what you do with your time, right? Well, today you'd be wiser to obey orders, and quickly. The other person isn't in the mood to argue. Save your energy for a time or place where you can use it to better advantage.

LEO: (July 23 to August 22) Love looks good for you right now. You could have a few stumbling blocks with communication, but nothing you can't handle. When the other person says something to you, why don't you just repeat it back? You might be surprised to find out it's not what the other person thinks he or she said at all.

VIRGO: (August 23 to September 22) Continue to divvy up your money carefully among all the places you could spend it. This will take concentration. There are plenty of things to spend money on, that's for sure. You're stretching your resources as far as they can go, but don't look at this as a hardship. Think of it instead as a game, at which you excel.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 23) The party continues. Looks like lots of outrageous people pushing themselves, and possibly you, to the limit. Under these conditions, it's easy to get swept along with the tide. You could find yourself doing something you wish you hadn't. It's OK to try new adventures, but don't be ridiculous about it. Remember to fasten your safety belt.

SCORPIO: (October 24 to November 21) You're racing around again today. You've got zillions of things to do, and nowhere near enough time. Don't get stressed. Just push yourself into overdrive. You're in the mood for it, and nobody's making you do this. Besides, you could be in on a fabulous opportunity. It's almost as if the more you work, the more money you make.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You are lucky in just about everything. You're solving difficult problems as if they were child's play. You communicate well with the ones you love, and your life is full. You look back to happy times and forward to more of them. If you find yourself in a slump, it's because you can't figure out what to do with all your abundance.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 19) You and your sweetheart need to talk. Issues raised over the weekend need to be resolved. You also need to compare notes on who said what, etc. Between you, you'll get a good picture of what's going on. Then you can decide what to do next. The time for decisions will be tonight and tomorrow.

AQUARIUS: (January 20 to February 18) You're getting new ideas, some of them contradicting what you already know. That happens when you learn. Just keep an open mind and ask leading questions. Now the rest of the story is coming out, and this could change things quite a bit. No problem. You can roll with the punches, if you keep objective in mind.

PISCES: (February 19 to March 20) This is a good day to invest in yourself. Get something that will give you an advantage in your career. A fabulous opportunity is coming up to make quite a bit more money, but you could use some help in getting organised. Today, a tool that will help you stay on schedule would be an excellent purchase.

Birth Stone of November: Topaz — Tiger's Eye




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Maradona quizzed by Italian judge on drug-taking

ROME (AFP) — Diego Maradona was questioned for more than two hours late Saturday in Turin by an Italian judge investigating drug-taking in the country's football scene.

After his interrogation he appeared with his wife Claudia Villafane at a window of prosecutor Raffaele Guariniello to the delight of some 100 fans who had been waiting to greet their idol since the afternoon.

Maradona then slipped out of a side door into a car, fleeing a pack of photographers and journalists waiting for him.

The former Napoli star, whose 15-month ban after testing positive for cocaine in 1991 ended his seven-year career with the club, was testifying as a witness.

His lawyer Vincenzo Siniscalchi told journalists that he had handed over all the relevant documentation concerning dope tests in 1991.

Recent Italian press reports claimed that blunders with the equipment were made in March 1991 at the now discredited Acqua Acetosa test laboratory, at the centre of the current drugs scandal in Italian soccer.

Not only Maradona's sample, but also the supposedly 'clean' control sample, which is only used for com-



Argentina's soccer star Diego Maradona leaves the Turin magistrates after speaking with magistrate Raffaele Guariniello as part of an ongoing probe into drug taking in Italian sport. The former Argentina and Napoli player arrived on a flight from Buenos Aires earlier in the day (Reuters photo)

parison purposes to make sure the equipment is set-up correctly, also showed traces of cocaine, the reports said.

The revelation sparked an immediate call for "justice" from Maradona, who said he was always "clean" when he went on a football

field. The 38-year-old star was involved in a scuffle with pressmen at Buenos Aires airport late Thursday as he prepared to fly out to Italy.

Swamped by journalists and autograph hunters, he snarled: "I'm not talking," then kicked out at the press

corps, making contact with a television journalist.

He was scheduled to return to Rome Saturday for a series of lucrative television shows, flying home next Thursday.

No trip to Naples, where he is still idolised, is planned.

Juventus match to go ahead — Galatasaray

ISTANBUL (R) — Galatasaray has received a fax from Juventus announcing the Italian club's plans to arrive in Turkey next Tuesday for their rescheduled European Champions' League match, Anatolian news agency said on Friday.

There had been uncertainty over whether Juventus would go to Istanbul for the match which was postponed this week amid tension over the fate of Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan.

"The Italian team sent a fax to Galatasaray announcing that it would come," Anatolian reported.

Italian sports minister Giovanna Melandri thanked her Turkish counterpart on Thursday for an invitation to the match but said her government would decide whether she should go.

European soccer's governing body UEFA postponed the Group B clash by a week from Wednesday to December 2 following widespread Turkish protests over Italy's failure to extradite Ocalan to Turkey.

UEFA vice-president Antonio Matarrese of Italy hinted the match could be postponed again if the political climate remains fraught.

Turkey holds Ocalan responsible for thousands of deaths in 14 years of conflict between his Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) and security forces.



Italian volleyball players celebrate their victory-point against Brazil during a semi-final match at the men's World Volleyball Championships in Tokyo. Italy beat Brazil 3-2 (15-10, 13-15, 15-11, 10-15, 15-10) (AFP photo)

Italy, Yugoslavia set up rematch at world championships

TOKYO (AFP) — Italy kept their hopes of a record third straight title alive on Saturday by beating Barcelona Olympic champions Brazil to win a finals berth at the men's world volleyball championships.

The Italians, whose defence of the title received a setback when they suffered a shock defeat to Yugoslavia in the previous round, won a tough battle for a 15-10, 13-15, 15-11, 10-15, 15-10 victory.

With the win, the Italians earned a rematch against Yugoslavia on Sunday, after the Yugoslavs outgunned Cuba 15-3, 15-12, 14-16, 15-10 in the other semi-final.

"It was an exciting, emotional match. I had worried about so many things during the championships, but I'm satisfied that we were able to survive the semi-finals," said Italian head coach Paulo de Freitas.

"It was the most difficult match I've ever seen as the coach. We could have played better technically, but we kept our concentration really well. I believe it is good preparation for tomorrow's match."

Brazilian coach Radames Lattari Filho said: "Both of us could have played better technically, but both played really well under heavy pressure. In the end, Italy won because they have more experience."

It will be a fourth major championships final for the Italians, who finished second in 1978. They also won the silver medal at the Atlanta Olympics and the gold at the 1995 World Cup.

For Yugoslavia, it will be their first appearance in any finals of the three major events.

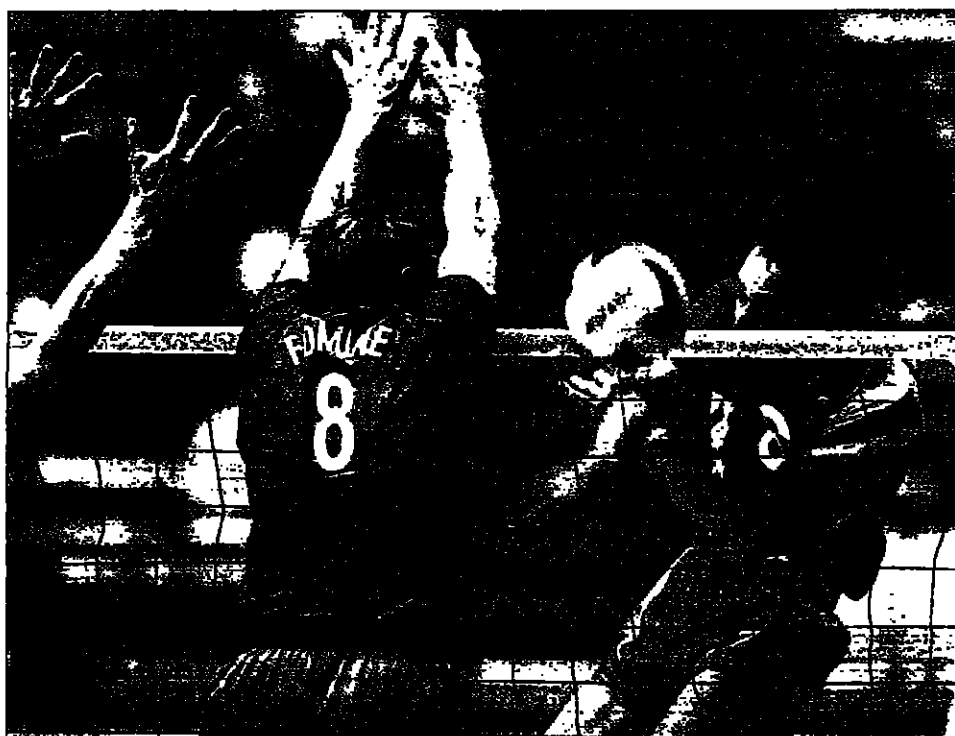
After returning to the international arena, Yugoslavia caused a sensation at the Atlanta Olympics

by clinching the bronze medal — their first medal in any of the three majors.

"I think my players thought of winning the match too much. That's why we lost the third set, but we are determined to win the gold medal tomorrow, we'll do our very best," said Yugoslav head coach Zoran Gajic.

Spiker Vladimir Grbic said: "In many other sports, Yugoslavia has won championships. I hope it will be our turn to win. It's very important for us. This is our chance."

Italy defeated Yugoslavia twice at the Atlanta Olympics but the Yugoslavs have proved they are ready for the top by beating the Italians at the European championships and on Wednesday here.



Hristo Tzvetanov (R) of Bulgaria spikes the ball through a block by Dmitri Fomine of Russia during the second set of their men's volleyball World Championships final round match at Yoyogi Gymnasium in Tokyo. Russia defeated Bulgaria 15-13, 15-2, 15-7 (Reuters photo)

Matthaus looks for move abroad

BONN (AFP) — Bayern Munich's veteran libero Lothar Matthaus said Saturday he was fed up with the jealousy he had to put up with in the German league and said he might move abroad to see out his playing days.

"I might just do that — why not?" 37-year-old Matthaus, Germany's appearance record holder with 130 caps, told Die Welt.

He blasted Germany as "a country riven with jealousy" and complained that "every move I make gets scrutinised under the microscope — people are just waiting for me to make a mistake."

And Matthaus, who set an all-time appearances record at the World Cup, said he was continually told he was over the hill if he missed a game through injury. But when young players were injured "people say it's the pressure."

Matthaus, who had a successful four-year spell with Inter Milan from 1988 before rejoining Bayern, said he fully intended to be around for Euro 2000 if the German national team need him.

Lee appointed Wolves manager

WOLVERHAMPTON (AFP) — Under-achieving English first division side Wolves on Saturday confirmed Colin Lee as their new manager.

Lee, who has been in caretaker charge of the side since Mark McGhee left the club earlier this month, has initially been appointed until the end of the season.

The 44-year-old former Chelsea and Tottenham striker has guided Wolves to three wins and a draw during his caretaker spell in charge and Wolves' managing director John Richards confirmed his appointment in a statement.

"Colin has put in a lot of hard work over the last couple of weeks and he has never allowed himself to be deflected from the job by all the speculation," Richards said. "The team has responded well to his leadership and the board was in no doubt that he should be given this chance."

"I put the offer to Colin and he was keen to take this

chance we feel that he will do very well for the club."

The news will give Wolves a massive lift ahead of Sunday's local derby with arch-rivals West Bromwich Albion at The Hawthorns.

Lee said he was delighted to be handed the reins at Molineux after steering the side up to fifth place in the table.

"It's been a hectic three or four weeks but I'm delighted to accept the job and hopefully I can win enough games to make it successful because that's what it's all about," he said.

"I can assure everyone out there that I'll put every single ounce of effort into this job to try and make it a permanent fixture for me, because at the moment the club have asked me to take the job on until the end of the season."

"Obviously I'm delighted to do that but it's my aim now to keep the job for a lot longer than that."

EXAMINATIONS

The British Council would like to announce that entries for the University of London GCE and the University of Cambridge IGCSE/GCE May/June 1999 session will be accepted from Tuesday 1 December to Thursday 3 December.

We encourage candidates to register during this period to avoid payment of the late entry fee.

Registration time: 09:30 am to 12:30 pm.

Candidates are required to bring with them an official identification document, one photocopy of the identification document and a passport sized photograph.

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Listings for films and showing times as received by cinemas and their advertising agencies.

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LOCAL
SPORTS
SCENE

Handicapped athletes mark King's birthday

AMMAN — Under the patronage of Prime Minister Faysal Tarawneh, the Jordan Sports Federation for the Handicapped in conjunction with the Ministry of Social Development will hold a sports festival for handicapped athletes Sunday. The event is one of many marking His Majesty King Hussein 63rd birthday.

Amman to host International Wrestling Tournament

AMMAN — The Jordan Olympic Committee has given the Jordan Wrestling Federation (JWF) the go-ahead to hold an international wrestling championship next year, sanctioned by the International Wrestling Federation. JWF President Ibrahim Awamleh said the committee set JD14,000 for the event, which will include athletes from Egypt, Syria, Tunisia, Algeria, Iraq, Romania, Bulgaria, Iran, Turkey, Yugoslavia, Greece, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, and Jordan. A joint Jordanian-Syrian training camp is expected to be held at the end of next month.

Basketball federation meets clubs officials

AMMAN — The Jordan Basketball Federation (JBF) will meet Sunday with local clubs to discuss the possibility of organising an under-18 championship next month, according to JBF President Mudar Majdoub. The federation is expected to examine the situation with Al Jazireh Club after recent controversies between the two sides. Al Jazireh's Nasser Alawneh and Musa Bashir might join the national team's training after Majdoub said he would send an official request to the club regarding the issue.

Asian federation to hold coaches seminar

AMMAN — The Asian Soccer Federation is planning to hold two training courses next year for Jordanian coaches at the advanced and beginner levels. The two-week-long first course is expected to be held in Irbid in February, while the second will be held in Amman in May for three weeks. Nominees will be chosen later according to the federation's conditions.

Jordan competes in Arab futsal tournament

AMMAN — The national soccer team Monday starts training for the First Arab Futsal Championship, which will be held in Egypt Dec. 5-16. Mu'taz Rishah, Ali Mahmoud, Muhammad Mahadin, Badran Shaqran, Hasounah Sheikh, Hamdi Saeed, Hatem Aqel, Abdullah Qutai, Ali Jum'a, Hussein Alawneh, Hytham Samrin and Ra'fat Ali will represent Jordan in the event.

Irbid wins chess championship

IRBID — Irbid clinched the title of the Jordanian Cities Chess Championship, which was held over the weekend, after a tough competition against Amman and Salt teams. Teams from Zarqa, Mafrqa, Ramtha, and Ajloun also took part.

Compiled by Ahmad Khatib



Renate Goetschl of Austria, speeds past a gate while on her way to winning the first women's World Cup downhill of the season, in Lake Louise, Canada. Goetschl won the race with a time of 1:36.12. Italy's Osolde Kostner was second and Austria's Alexandra Meissnitzer was third (Reuters photo)

Goetschl cruises to downhill win

LAKE LOUISE (AFP) — Austria's Renate Goetschl won the first downhill of the women's alpine World Cup season here on Friday in a field lacking the two premier women downhillers: Katja Seizinger and Picabo Street. Goetschl clocked 1min 36.12sec, finishing less than half a second ahead Italian Isolde Kostner (1:36.43). Alexandra Meissnitzer of Austria was third in 1:36.64. "Everything was going good for me today, both my skies and the run were good," said Goetschl, who captured the third World Cup downhill victory of her career after Vail in 1997 and Altenmarkt in 1998.

Goetschl, 23, finished in third place here last year. "This course is so different each year which makes it very difficult to ski," she said. "You can't make a mistake on this course or you will be behind quickly. I had a little trouble getting ready for the race. I wasn't as relaxed as I like to be."

Kostner, 23, added a runner-up finish to the two third places she claimed in the World Cup's Lake Louise stop in 1987. "I like this course but in the past I have been unlucky here. Today, the snow was soft but I had a good line from the start."

She was unable to make this her fifth downhill victory

but she did prevent a top three sweep by the Austrian team. Austria had three racers in the top six as Michaela Dorfmeister finished sixth in 1:37.04.

Goetschl and Kostner were the only two skiers able, last winter, to beat Seizinger and win a downhill. But Germany's Seizinger is still recovering from injury, as is America's Street. Seizinger won all three World Cup races at Lake Louise last year before going on to take the gold medal in the downhill at the Nagano Winter Olympics.

She is recovering from a knee injury suffered in June while testing new skies. She hopes to be back on skis in a couple of weeks and possibly compete in the world championships in January in Vail. Street is nursing a knee injury that she fears could mean the end of her downhill days.

More than 60 centimetres of snow fell on the course Wednesday and Thursday, forcing the cancellation of Thursday's third training run. The weather, cloudy, cleared Friday after the first 10 minutes of the race so that the majority of the racers ran under sunny skies.

The skiers tested the top section of the course for the first time Friday morning. The first three gates had been closed during the two train-

ing runs because of fresh snow. A total of 54 racers completed the 2,601 metre course with a vertical drop of 687 metres.

Special
Week
favourite
for Japan
Cup

TOKYO (R) — Japan Derby winner Special Week was listed as the 5-2 favourite on Saturday for Sunday's Japan Cup, the country's top international horse race.

Due to the thin field of foreign entries, Japanese horses were the top three favourites in the 2,400 metre race on turf, which offers 132 million yen (\$1.1 million) to the winner.

Three-year-old Special Week, sired by Kentucky Derby winner Sunday Silence out of Campaign Girl, cruised to an easy victory in the 2,400-metre Japan Derby on June 7.

The colt will be ridden by Yukio Okabe.

Japanese five-year-old mare Air Groove, the runner up in last year's Japan Cup and ridden by Norihito Yokoyama on Sunday, was the next favourite at 5-1.

Three-year-old Japanese colt El Condor Pasa with Masayoshi Ebina aboard was listed at 7-1.

Among the foreign horses, 1997 Breeder's Cup Turf winner Chief Bearhart was listed at 10-1.

The Canadian horse placed fourth in this year's Breeder's Cup Turf as the chestnut rallied in the home stretch, but did not have enough to defend its title.

British gelding Faithful Son with jockey Lanfranco Dettori was also at 10-1.

Faithful Son represents Godolphin Management and would appreciate the drop back from the two miles of the Melbourne Cup where he was a creditable seventh under top weight.

German colt Caitano was listed at 14-1 to win the Cup in its second straight attempt. Arc de Triomphe winning jockey Olivier Peslier will be aboard the colt.

Five-year-old U.S. mare Maxene, ridden by Cash Asmussen, was at 25-1 while much-traveled British horse Luso was at 60-1.

Top Irish jockey Michael Kinane will try to lead the Clive Brittain-trained horse to victory in its seventh country.

Moya ends Spain's long wait
to reach Hanover final

HANOVER (AFP) — Carlos Moya became the first Spaniard since Manuel Orantes in 1976 to reach the World Championship final as he outfought Briton Tim Henman for a 6-4, 3-6, 7-5 semi-final victory here on Saturday.

Henman, who has improved his ATP Tour computer ranking from ninth to a career-best seventh, felt the tension in the closing stages of the 2hr 20min battle.

Moya produced a blazing passing shot which the Briton could not touch to hold two match points and then produced a superb service return winner for victory to take his career record to two wins and three defeats against Henman.

The Spaniard, winner of the French Open and now far from being merely a clay court specialist, will await an opponent from the second semi-final between top seed Pete Sampras of the United States and Spaniard Alex Corretja.

Henman blamed his defeat on his service, which was also cruelly exposed by Greg Rusedski on Friday.

"It has not been good enough all week. I wasn't getting a lot of first serves in and I had to win points from the backcourt moving up, that's not how I wanted to do it," the 24-year-old said.

However, Henman, who finished last year ranked 17 added that he would be disappointed if he did not make further progress next season.



Britain's Tim Henman returns a backhand to his Spanish opponent and this year's French Open champion Carlos Moya, during their semifinal clash at the ATP World Championships in Hanover (AFP photo)

"If I can continue the progress of the past five or six months, reaching the quarter-finals of Grand Slams will not be good enough," he said.

"I'll be wanting to get to the finals and win them," he added.

Sampras is seeking to cap a dream season — in which he clinched the year-end World No.1 ranking for a record-breaking sixth straight time — with a fifth trophy at the \$3.5 million championships.

Corretja will aim to double the Spanish pleasure at the eight-man event.

Moya needed 51 minutes to win the opening set in front of a crowd of 13,000

which included German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder.

The Spaniard broke Henman in the seventh game, taking a 4-3 lead.

Three games later, he secured the set after Henman saved the first of two Moya set points with an sharply angled cross-court winner.

Moya put a forehand down the line to take the set on the next point.

The Briton rallied immediately in the second set, breaking the Spaniard twice for a 4-1 lead. Henman saved break points in the seventh game and levelled sets with an unreturnable serve.

Henman broke in the first game of the final set, but Moya then displayed his fighting spirit with a forehand past the Briton to break back and level at 3-3.

The Briton failed on a pair of break point chances in the seventh game and had to save one against his own serve in the eighth.

Moya got out of potentially serious trouble when down 30-40 in the ninth game, saving the break point when Henman slipped and was unable to chase a return. The Briton made it 5-5 with a reflex volley winner but Moya then won the final two games to seal his win.

Warnecke
equals his
own world
record

FULDA, Germany (AFP) — Mark Warnecke of Germany equalled his own world record of 26.97sec for the 50m breaststroke at the German short-course swimming championships on Sunday.

Warnecke, 28, a bronze medalist at the Atlanta Olympics, set the short-course record on February 8, 1997 in Paris.

Bayern,
Leverkusen
pull clear

BONN (R) — Home wins for Bayern Munich and Bayer Leverkusen on Saturday allowed them to pull away from their rivals at the top of the German first division.

Leaders Bayern cruised to a 2-0 triumph over Nuremberg with goals from Giovane Elber and Bixente Lizarazu.

Paulo Rink and Emerson gave Leverkusen a 2-0 victory against MSV Duisburg.

Leverkusen stayed second, two points behind Bayern, who have a game in hand. Third-placed TSV 1860 Munich lost ground, crashing 4-1 at Werder Bremen. They were left five points behind Leverkusen.

West Ham move to 2nd

LONDON (R) — Two goals by Trevor Sinclair gave West Ham United a 2-1 victory over Tottenham Hotspur on Saturday and moved them to second place in the English Premier League.

Harry Redknapp's team are on 26 points — three behind Aston Villa who came from 2-0 down to draw 2-2 at Nottingham Forest.

Manchester United, Arsenal and Leeds are all in action on Sunday. Duncan Ferguson celebrated his 8 million pounds (\$13.25 million) move to Newcastle United by scoring twice in a 3-1 home victory over Wimbledon while Danny Cadamarteri, replacing the Scot at Everton, scored twice in their 2-1 win at Charlton.

Elsewhere, Emile Heskey scored in the last minute to earn 10-man Leicester a 1-1 draw at Coventry. Chelsea were held 1-1 at home by Sheffield Wednesday while Derby won 1-0 at Southampton.

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The qualified persons shall submit their CV and certificates to the Jordan Valley Authority (Address below) no later than 14:00 local time on 5th of December, 1998.

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Secretary General
Jordan Valley Authority

Amman P.O. Box 2769 - Jordan

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Tel.: 962-6-5689400/Ext. 401

Handwritten signature in Arabic script.

The National Music Conservatory / Noor Al Hussein Foundation

Monday, 30 November 1998 - 8:00 p.m.
Marriott Hotel, Al Waha Hall, JD 7

Crazy About George
Kathryn Magestro (soprano) and John Ferguson (piano)

In cooperation with the American Center

Tuesday, 1 December 1998 - 8:00 p.m.
Yara Saida Cultural Center, JD 7

Pilar Jurado (soprano),
Manuel Rodriguez (flute) and Julio Mañiz (piano)

In cooperation with Instituto Cervantes

Wednesday, 2 December 1998 - 8:00 p.m.
Radisson SAS Hotel-Philadelphia Hall, JD 21

A Concert of Musical Relics
(harp, violin, cello, horn, clarinet and piano and vocals)

All proceeds will go to the Fund in Memory of Dina Habash
at Al Malath Foundation for Humanistic Care

Saturday, 5 December 1998 - 8:00 p.m.
Union Bank Hall, JD 7

Italian Piano Duo
Barbara Cattabiani and Domenico Poccia

In cooperation with the Italian Embassy

Tickets available at:

- Alahia-Abela Superstore, tel. 5688481
- Alisar Flowers, tel. 5527695
- Babiche, tel. 5661322

- Caffe Moka, tel. 5926285
- Music Box, tel. 5815745
- Radisson SAS Hotel, tel. 5607100
- The National Music Conservatory, tel. 5687620

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Reappointment of Hariri hits snag

BEIRUT (AP) — Prime Minister Rafik Hariri's efforts to win a fourth term in office have hit a snag after he failed to receive the expected speedy appointment from new President Emile Lahoud.

Hariri is still the front-runner to form the next government but Saturday's Daily Star newspaper quoted sources as saying that Hariri was "outraged" that only 62 of the 128 members in parliament declared their support for him during a meeting with Lahoud Friday.

According to the constitution, a president must begin his term by appointing the prime minister and a cabinet through a decree issued after consulting with parliament members.

A presidential decree was expected Friday but nothing came through after a meeting between Lahoud and Hariri. Hariri had even scheduled Friday a traditional meeting between the prime minister-designate and former prime ministers, but that was cancelled.

The state-run National News Agency said that while only 62 deputies told Lahoud they supported Hariri, the rest refused to divulge their choice or left it to the president to decide.

A TV station owned by Hariri said he won the backing of at least 100 deputies.

The delay reflects the tug-of-war among the power brokers in the country. Under a formula aimed at preventing the recurrence of the 1975-90 civil war, power in Lebanon is shared equally by a Maronite Christian president, a Sunni Muslim prime minister and a Shiite parliament speaker.

While the Christian Lahoud may have no objection to appointing the Sunni Hariri, it is possible that Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri's 19 Shiite supporters in the legislature are holding out to emphasize their value.

The leading Al Nahar and other newspapers said the delay could last for days. But in the end, it is Hariri that is

most likely to be renamed on the strength of his record in office.

Hariri, Lebanon's top businessman, has almost single-handedly created a multibillion dollar programme to rebuild a country destroyed by the civil war. He is also credited with stabilising the currency and restoring confidence in the postwar economy.

But his government under former President Elias Hrawi were dogged by accusations of corruption.

Hariri, who has been prime minister since 1992, was appointed three times during the extended term of former President Elias Hrawi. He has remained in office as caretaker prime minister since Lahoud succeeded Hrawi on Tuesday.

Lahoud, a general who as army commander rebuilt the military from 1989 until his election by parliament in October, has pledged in his inauguration speech Tuesday to clean up the corruption-plagued administration.

Talks on government coalition for Turkey set to drag on

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkey's President Suleyman Demirel on Saturday said he might have to hold another round of talks with the leaders of the country's political parties before appointing one of them to form a new government, the Anadolu news agency reported.

"It's not just a question of forming a government," Demirel told Turkish reporters on a visit to Bolu in central Anatolia. "I need to know what this government plans to do and how long it will stay in office."

Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz submitted his resignation to Demirel on Wednesday after his tripartite minority coalition government was toppled in a no-confidence vote in parliament.

The country's political establishment is sharply divided on

the question of an election date.

While most party leaders want to stick to early elections next April — as decided by parliament earlier this year — and some favour bringing the date even further forward, Demirel has suggested reversing the decision and postponing elections until the regular end of parliament's term in the year 2000.

Observers in Ankara say the president's stance may reflect the attitude of the country's military leadership, who fear an Islamist victory in early elections.

Demirel wound up a first round of exploratory talks with representatives of all 10 parties in parliament on Friday, two days after the minority coalition led by Mesut Yilmaz was toppled by a vote of no-confidence.

Italy, Germany to seek ways to try Ocalan

(Continued from page 1)

The lawyers said there was a risk that the PKK leader could commit serious crimes and flee the country because of unspecified external aid.

Ankara had earlier implied that it might agree to the trial of the PKK leader by a German court, but Bonn on Friday declined to have him extradited. Turkey's acting Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz on Friday repeated his demand for Ocalan's extradition, after Italian Premier Massimo D'Alema and German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder called for the PKK leader to be tried by an international court.

"Turkey will not allow those who want to make a political issue of separatist terrorists to proceed," Yilmaz said.

Meanwhile in Germany, thousands of Turks on Saturday called for Ocalan to be brought to justice. In Berlin, 6,000 people protested at "PKK terrorism" and called Ocalan a murderer, while 4,000 people marched to the Italian embassy in Bonn in a protest against the

PKK claims responsibility for downing of helicopter

ANKARA (AFP) — The Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) has claimed responsibility for the downing of a Turkish army helicopter in which at least 15 Turkish soldiers were killed, the pro-PKK DEM agency reported Saturday. DEM said 17 Turkish soldiers were killed. Turkish authorities earlier confirmed the crash of a military helicopter in the region on the Iraqi border on Friday, but said the cause was still unknown.

handling of the Ocalan case by Italian authorities.

In Munich, 6,500 demonstrators, according to the police, criticised "mistakes made by the Italian government" and 5,000 protesters also took to the streets in Nuremberg.

Majali elected speaker

(Continued from page 1)

The Crown Prince on Saturday called Srour and expressed appreciation for his efforts during his four-year period as speaker. He also telephoned Majali and congratulated him on his election as speaker of the Lower House.

Majali, brother of former Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, has had a varied career.

The 64-year-old Karak deputy obtained his B.Sc. in civil engineering from Baghdad University. He

was appointed chief of staff of operations in the Jordanian Armed Forces in 1979. He served as ambassador to the U.S. in 1981 and was later appointed director general of the Public Security Department. Majali also served as minister of public works in the government of former Prime Minister Abul Karim Kabariti.

More recently, he has been the secretary general of the 3000-member National Constitutional Party, a centrist political party, for the last six years.

Talabani doubts Saddam will be toppled soon

TEHRAN (AFP) — Visiting Iraqi Kurdish leader Jalal Talabani voiced doubts here on Saturday that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein will be toppled soon.

"I cannot predict a date when Saddam will be overthrown, but it won't be any time soon," Talabani told the English-language newspaper Iran News.

The leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), one of two main rival Kurdish factions which control northern Iraq in defiance of Baghdad, also said he was opposed to any "foreign, including American" bid to topple the Iraqi leader.

"Making changes in the Iraqi leadership is the responsibility of Iraqi people and democratic revolutionary forces, not foreign elements," he was quoted as saying. The United States has officially announced its support for the Iraqi opposition in exile as part of a long-term strategy to topple Saddam.

But Talabani, who has earlier said he will not participate in any moves to overthrow Saddam, said his views were shared by other Iraqi opposition groups, including the Iran-based Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SAIRI).

WASHINGTON — The United States, hoping to build on the modest success of last month's Wye agreement, will try to mobilise financial support for Middle East peace at a conference on Monday of donors to the Palestinian economy. Representatives of at least 45 countries, including some 17 ministers, will gather at the State Department in a reprise of the pledging conference held in Washington in October 1993.

"We are always for trying to reinforce the political process with an economic dimension," said an official close to the U.S. mediation between Israel and the Palestinians.

The United States expects to raise pledges of over \$2 billion over five years for the Palestinians and is promising to increase its own contribution to more than the \$500 million it promised at the 1993 meeting.

The value of pledges from the 1993 conference started at \$2.3 billion and rose with time to \$4 billion. The donors eventually disbursed just over half, \$2.1 billion.

"The conference... will call on international donors to pledge enhanced higher levels of assistance for this next phase," said State Department spokesman James Rubin.

The United States called the meet-



An Israeli police man hits out at a Palestinian youth after riots broke out when Israeli police and soldiers broke up a demonstration in Arab east Jerusalem on Saturday. All over the West Bank and in Jerusalem Palestinians staged demonstrations calling for the release of prisoners from Israeli jails (AP photo)

Egyptian human rights group to reject all foreign donations

CAIRO (AP) — An Egyptian human rights group said Saturday it will return a British Parliament donation of \$25,000 after a newspaper alleged the payment was in return for false reporting about police brutality on Christians.

The Egyptian Organisation of Human Rights (EOHR) has also decided to reject all foreign donations, either government or voluntary agencies. Mahmoud Qandiel, a lawyer with the group, told the Associated Press.

He said British Parliament's Human Rights Committee has sent the check in October as a second payment for a two-year-long women's legal aid programme, he said. The check will soon be sent to the

British Embassy as proof of EOHR's neutrality, he said.

A furore was sparked after the EOHR reported that police while investigating a murder of two Coptic Christians in the southern town of Al Kuseh in August rounded up hundreds of Copts and beat them in a bid to extract false confessions.

The report said police feared the culprits were Muslim and were anxious to pin the blame on Christians to prevent religious strife in the Christian majority town.

During interviews with the Associated Press, many villagers confirmed they were tortured.

The government denied widespread torture in Al Kuseh and said only 14 people were detained. The

interior ministry says foreign-funded rights groups are maligning Egypt.

Besides Britain, EOHR gets donations from organisations such as the U.S. National Endowment for Democracy, the European Fund for Human Rights, the Swedish Church Mission and Oxfam.

"Organisations like EOHR do very good work here [in Egypt] and that is why we support them," British embassy spokesman Ed Webb said.

Qandiel said the decision to return the money was taken by EOHR's 15-member board, which met Thursday to discuss the accusations by an independent weekly newspaper, Al Ushua, of \$25,000 for treason, said a front page head-

line in its Nov. 23 edition.

Calling it a "flagrant conspiracy on Egyptian national security," Al Ushua said EOHR took the money "in return for a fabricated report [about] persecution during the Al Kuseh village incidents."

Two days later, Prosecutor General Raga Al Araby launched an investigation and questioned the paper's chief editor, Mustafa Bakry, who is believed to have close links with interior ministry officials.

Qandiel said the prosecutor is expected to question the EOHR soon, but no date was set yet.

He said rejecting foreign donations will severely hamper EOHR's work since local donations are scarce.

'Iranian police investigating attack on Americans'

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iranian police are investigating an attack on a group of visiting Americans by Islamist fundamentalists last week and are close to identifying the culprits, Interior Minister Abdul Vahed Musavi-Lari said Saturday.

"Police are investigating the attack on the bus and culprits have been identified to a large extent," Musavi-Lari told a press conference. Denouncing the visiting Americans as "spies," a

group of Islamist hardliners attacked their bus with iron bars and stones last Saturday, breaking windows and slightly injuring several passengers with flying glass.

The Americans left the country the following day.

A group calling itself the "Fedayeen [Devotees] of Islam" claimed responsibility for the attack, which it said was a warning to the Iranian authorities and "CIA spies" visiting Iran in

the guise of tourists.

But the minister insisted "this group is illegal and it will be dealt with accordingly. We will halt their activities," he said.

"We will not let any one in whatever disguise and under any banner to cause disorder and abuse freedom in the name of sacred values," he vowed. "Such a capricious act by a group of people is against the interests of the regime."

"We must respect all those

who are our guests and who have entered the country legally. There's no justification for the attack and no one in the Islamic republic approves of it," Musavi-Lari said.

Most of the press and many officials have condemned the attack and President Mohammad Khatami described it as "intolerable."

The foreign ministry on Friday condemned it as "illegal and unacceptable."

U.S. seeks to mobilise aid for Mideast peace

By Jonathan Wright
Reuters

WASHINGTON — The United States, hoping to build on the modest success of last month's Wye agreement, will try to mobilise financial support for Middle East peace at a conference on Monday of donors to the Palestinian economy.

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"The conference... will call on international donors to pledge enhanced higher levels of assistance for this next phase," said State Department spokesman James Rubin.

The United States called the meet-

ing at short notice just as Israel began its latest withdrawal from parts of the West Bank under the deal signed with the Palestinians in Washington on Oct. 23.

The withdrawal was the most visible sign that the Wye agreement, despite some teething troubles, did break a deadlock which lasted more than a year and a half.

The mood among Palestinians rose again this week when Gaza's international airport opened to traffic. Gazans saw it as a prelude to statehood, as well as a welcome window on the world for people who for more than 30 years could not leave the Gaza Strip without going through Israeli security checks.

But opponents of the agreements negotiated by Palestinian President Yasser Arafat say Palestinians have ended up worse off than they were even under Israeli occupation.

Unemployment in Palestinian National Authority (PNA) areas in the West Bank and Gaza Strip fell 10.6 per cent in the first quarter of 1998 compared to the same period in 1997, a U.N. report said.

Real monthly household expenditure in the West Bank and Gaza Strip fell 10.6 per cent in the first quarter of 1998 compared to the same period in 1997, a U.N. report said.

A report by the PNA this month said 23 per cent of families in the Gaza Strip and West Bank, including Arab east Jerusalem, live below the poverty line.

According to the U.N. report, if Palestinian and International Monetary Fund economic forecasts and population growth estimates are correct, per capita gross domestic product will fall 3.4 per cent to about \$1,380 by the end of 1998. U.S. officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, defended the international aid programme for the Palestinian areas, saying it had helped build new homes, paved roads and improve the sewage system, for example.

"But there's a lot more that has to be done, given the high unemployment and high birth rate. We are going to do better and we'd like to see others do better," one U.S. official said.

"One way to underpin peace and build a constituency for peace is to make certain that people are better off and obviously that's one of the things we would like the donor community to do its utmost to achieve," he added.

Because of the short notice, the United States does not expect to get many firm promises on Monday. "Most governments will not be in a position to pledge against specific projects. We would envision notional pledges by governments with

caveats that they need to consult with their respective parliaments," a U.S. official said.

The World Bank will organise a consultative group meeting in Europe in early February to match projects and pledges, the official added. That could be in Paris, Bonn or Berlin.

The U.S. administration says it will offer "substantially" more than \$500 million over five years but it will not give a figure because it too is still consulting with Congress.

Less and less aid will now go to pay the budget of the PNA, the priority in the first years of the Oslo peace process, and more and more to projects.

"The Palestinian Authority is now in a better position to sustain budget costs through their own tax base and revenue sources and their own income base," a U.S. official said.

The \$100 million a year for the Palestinians compares with the \$3 billion a year the United States gives to Israel. The aid to Israel, \$1.8 billion of which is for military purposes, has long been a major grievance of the Arabs.

Those attending the conference include the foreign ministers of Austria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Arafat will attend but Israeli Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon cannot come due to political preoccupations at home.

Man convicted of rape supposedly castrated

RICHMOND (AP) — Years after a convicted rapist agreed to go through a highly publicised "chemical castration" as part of his probation, he has pleaded guilty to new sex crimes and police are investigating him in connection with up to 75 more. Joseph Frank Smith — dubbed the Ski Mask Rapist when he was convicted of raping the same woman twice in San Antonio, Texas in 1983 — agreed to impotence-causing injections as a condition of his probation.

Honesty tested when cash falls out of van

PARIS (R) — What would you do if you saw a sack of money fall off the back of a lorry? That testing question was answered for real when not one, but three, sacks containing \$357,000 fell out of a security van in the French town of Montpellier, France. Info radio said on Saturday. One bag was taken to the post office by the couple who found it. One was ripped open by a passing car, and passers-by fought for the flying banknotes. A man who whisked away the third was found by police at home, counting the cash.

'Fat Controller' jailed for stealing trains

LONDON (R) — A portly British railway manager known as "The Fat Controller" was jailed for 27 months Friday for stealing enough locomotives, wagons and carriages to start his own railway. Barry Daly, who gained his nickname from the "Thomas The Tank Engine" children's books, perpetrated an elaborate paperwork fraud to steal four locomotives, six passenger carriages, three breakdown coaches and 30 wagons.

Sex firm eyes foreign expansion

FLensburg (R) — Beate Uhse, Germany's largest retailer of erotic merchandise, is wooing investors to finance an expansion abroad. The firm's owner and driving force is Beate Rothemann, a 79-year-old former pilot who tested Luftwaffe fighter planes during the World War II. She told Reuters she would sell 30 per cent of the company on the stock market, a share issue being the only way to obtain enough cash to penetrate lucrative foreign markets.

'Puff Daddy' serves Thanksgiving dinner to homeless

NEW YORK (AP) — Rapper and music producer Sean "Puff Daddy" Combs took time out from serving up hip-hop hits to treat more than 2,000 homeless people to Thanksgiving dinner in Harlem. Combs returned to the gymnasium where he once played basketball as a child to dish out the turkey and side dishes that are traditional for the American holiday, and said Thanksgiving is a time to remember those less fortunate. "Being homeless is the worst thing in the world on a day like today," he said.

Rodman grapples in court

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — Dennis Rodman, already fighting to have his quickie marriage annulled and facing assault charges in court, says he wasn't fully paid for performing in two pro wrestling events. The Chicago Bulls' tattooed forward claims his contract to host one World Championship Wrestling event and wrestle in another included a base salary of \$750,000 as well as a share of pay-per-view television revenue.

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